

Wm. Jones
Speculum Beatae Virginis.

A
DISCOURSE
OF THE
Due Praise *and* Honour
OF THE
VIRGIN MART.

By a true CATHOLICK of the
Church of England.

i.e. George Hickes A.D.

The Second Edition more full, and correct, than the former.

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L O N D O N

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THE VIRGINIA

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THE
PREFACE.

THE chief End for which I undertook to make this following Discourse, was to set before the English Reader a prospect of the Devotions, which the Church of Rome pays, and allows to be paid to the Blessed Virgin, and to give him thereby an opportunity of judging, Whether the R. Catholicks do indeed no more, than pray to the Saints in Heaven, as they do to their Brethren upon earth, to pray for them in the Name, and Mediation of Jesus Christ.

This is the Summ of the late Apologies for Worshipping of Saints, and whether in reality it be so, or no, among them, I leave the candid, and honest Reader, of what Religion soever, to judg. They have no reason to be offended at me for my Undertaking: for if their Devotions to the Virgin be good, and Orthodox, I have done them, and their Church no dishonour; but if they be not, however I have done them no wrong: for I have not misrepresented their Prayers, and Hymns, and Antiphones, nor put any false Colours upon the use of them, but have presented them, as they are in themselves, and treated those that use them without any provoking or reproachful Language; and perhaps many, that at first sight cannot read such offensive Devotions without Indignation, will think I have treated the Virgins Votaries too gently, and said rather too little, than too much.

But what may perhaps justly move their Passions, will not move mine, who am used to read the Latin Offices,

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and other allowed Books of Devotion among those of the Latin Communion, and I think fit also to acquaint the Reader, that I could have proved from their most Authentick Prayers to other Saints, as well, as to the Virgin, that they do more, than desire the Saints to pray for them, as sick men desire the prayers of the Congregation, as any indifferent person will be satisfied they do, if he please to consult the Hymns and Prayers cited in the Margin.

Hymn. Beate
Pastor Petre. in
Brev. Rom. D.
28. Jan. & ali-
bi. Hymn.
Tu natale solum

protegi. Brev. Rom. in Festo S. Martinæ. Antiph. Michael Archangels veni in adiutorium populo Dei. Brev. Rom. in Fest. S. Mich. Hymn. Ut quant laxis. Brev. Rom. in Nat. S. J. Bapt. Hymn. Egredis Deslor Pauli. Br. Rom. Die 29. Jan. Orat. Deus cujus dexterâ. Br. Rom. D. 6. Jul. Orat. Omnipotens, & misericors Deus. Br. Rom. D. 14. Jul. Hymn. Regis superni nuntia. Brev. Rom. in Festo S. Tiresiz. Hymn. Placare Christe Servulis. Br. Rom. in Festo omnium Sanctor. Et Orat. sempiternus Deus. ibid. Et Hymn. Salutis æternæ dator. ibid. in tert. Nocturn. Orat. Sacrificium nostrum. Missal. in Fest. S. Andræ.

Since I finished this Discourse, I met with another Hymn made of the Te Deum, to the Blessed Virgin, which is a more exact Transprosal of it, than that I have cited out of Cardinal Bonaventure.

*I shall here set it down, almost verbatim, as I find it translated in a little * Book Printed at Oxford, 1678.*

* Entitled,
A Decree of
our Holy Fa-
ther Pope Inno-
cent XI. &c.

We praise thee, O Mary: we acknowledge thee to be the Lady. All the earth doth worship thee: the Mother of the everlasting God. To thee all Angels cry aloud: the Heavens and all the powers therein. To thee Cherubim and Seraphim: continually do cry. Holy, venerable, wonderful: Mother of the Lord God of Sabaoth. Heaven, and earth are full: of the fruitfulness of thy Virginitie. The glorious company of the Apostles: praise thee. The goodly number of the Prophets: praise thee: The holy Church throughout the world: doth acknowledge thee. The Mother: of infinite Majesty. Thine honourable, true: and only Son. Conceived by the Holy Ghost: the Comforter. Thou art the Queen of Glory: O

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Mary. Thou art the true Mother : of the Son of the Everlasting Father. When he took upon him to deliver man : thou didst afford him thy Virgin-womb. Thy Seed having overcome the sharpness of death : the Kingdom of Heaven is open to all believers. Thou sittest at the right hand of thy Son : in the glory of the Mother. We believe, that thou shalt come : with thy Son the Judge. We therefore pray thee help thy Votaries : whom thy Son hath redeemed with the precious blood he had from thee. Make them to be numbered with the Saints of God : in eternal glory. *O Lady* save thy people, and bless thy Sons inheritance. Day by day : we magnifie thee. And we worship thy name : ever world without end. Vouchsafe, *O Lady* : to keep us this day without sin. *O Lady*, have mercy upon us : have mercy upon us. *O Lady*, let thy mercy lighten upon us : as our trust is in thee. *O Mary*, in thee have I trusted after God : let me never be confounded.

The Publisher of the forecited Book took the Original of this Hymn, out of a book written by Melchior Inchofer a Jesuit, which that Father saith was sent to the Messenese by the Blessed Virgin, and he thinks it was the same Office, or not much differing from that, which Pope Paul the Fifth approved, and which the present Pope hath prohibited, and suppressed by a Decree. But whether it was the very same, or only of the same, or like nature, the Pope's decree is worthy of his holy Character, and I wish for his honour he had prohibited it as Impious, or Blasphemous, or Idolatrous, or contrary to the word of God. However the bare prohibition of it ought to be acknowledged for a good work, and I beseech Almighty God to pour out the Spirit of Reforming more and more upon the Bishop, and Clergy of the Roman Church, that instead of Expounding, Palliating, and Excusing, they may

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may set themselves in good earnest to Reform, and amend whatever is amiss, that so the Church, wheresoever dispersed over the Universal World, may be restored to the truly Ancient, Catholick, and Apostolical Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline, and become one undivided Catholick Communion, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN.

Specu-

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S. LUKE i. 28.

And the Angel came in unto Her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with Thee, Blessed art thou among Women.

THE words of my Text are the Salutation of the Angel *Gabriel*, unto the Virgin *Mary*, when he came to tell her, that God had chosen her to be the Mother of the *Messias*. And that they are words of pure Salutation, and not of Devotion, is evident from the word *Χαῖρε*, Hail, which is a form of Saluting, as may be seen in those two mock-salutations of our Lord, *Χαῖρε Παῖσι*, *Χαῖρε ὁ Βασιλεὺς*, Hail, Master, Hail King of the Jews; as likewise from the use of the Original word, in *Acts* 15. 23. where it is said, that the *Apostles and Elders wrote Letters, and sent greeting to the Brethren, in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia.*

It is also evident that these are words of mere Salutation, from what the Evangelist saith in the next Verse, that upon hearing of them *she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind, what manner of SALUTATION this should be.* It seemed strange to her, that an Angel should appear to her in an Age, when Visions and Apparitions were grown so rare, and that she should be accosted by him with a joyful, and gracious Salutation, which was so much above the humble opinion she had of her self. Her modesty encreased her wonder, and in a mixture of fear and surprize together, she began to think within her self, what the meaning of the Salutation might be, whither it would tend, and what the Angel had to say unto her. She was very folicitous betwixt hope and fear, to know what message he had to deliver, after his kind Salutation, and while she was musing what it might be, he said unto her, *Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favour with God,*

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God, and behold thou shalt conceive in thy Womb, and bring forth a Son, and shalt call his name Jesus; He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; And the Lord shall give unto him the Throne of his Father David, and he shall Reign over the house of David for ever, and of his Kingdom there shall be no end.

These are the words of the *Annunciation* or *Mess*age of the Angel, but I shall keep strictly to the words of his Salutation. And in treating of them I shall shew,

1. That there is nothing in their signification so peculiar to the *B. Virgin*, but that they might have been used by the Angel, in saluting any other Righteous and Holy person.
2. That the *B. Virgin*, to whom the Angel spake then was a very Holy person.
3. That she ought to be honoured, and celebrated, and praised for her great Holiness, and for being chosen to be the Mother of God.
4. That in honouring her we must take care that we do not honour her too much, or express the honour we have for her in such a manner, as is not competent to a Creature.

1. First then I shall shew, that the words of the Salutation have nothing so peculiar in their signification, but that they might have been used by the Angel in saluting any other Righteous person.

To begin with the Original word *χαῖρε*, which we render *Hail*, and the Vulgar Latin *Ave*, it was as I have already shewn, a common form of Saluting among the Jews; and it farther appears to have been so from the second Epistle of S. John, ver. 10, 11. where the Apostle forbidding to salute any man that denieth Christ to be come in the Flesh, saith, *καὶ χαίρετε αὐτῷ μὴ λέγετε*, say not *Hail* unto him; *nec ave dixeritis*, saith the Vulgar Translation, *bid him not God speed*; *ὁ δὲ λέγων αὐτῷ χαῖρε, quis enim dicit illi Ave*, for he that saith *Hail* unto him, or he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds.

Thus God, and Angels, when they speak with men, use the phrases, and speak with the tongues of men. And so for that expression, *The Lord is with thee*, or as it might be rendered, *the Lord be with thee*, it is the very form of speech in which Boaz saluted the Reapers, *Ruth* 2. 4. *And Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the Reapers, The Lord be with you, and they answered him, The Lord bless thee.*

And

And so for that Phrase *εὐλογημένη σὺ ἐν γυναιξί*, *blessed art thou*, or *blessed be thou, among women*, we have the very same form of speech in *Judges 5. 24.* *εὐλογηθεὶς ἐν γυναιξί 'Ιαήλ*, *Blessed be Jael among women, the wife of Heber, blessed shall she be above women in the Tent.* So *Boaz* said unto *Ruth*, *Ruth 3. 10.* *εὐλογημένη σὺ τῷ Κεῖνι Θεῷ Δούλῃς*, *Blessed be thou of the Lord my Daughter.* And so *1 Sam. 25. 33.* saith *David* unto *Abigail*, *εὐλογημένη σὺ*, *blessed art thou which hast kept me from shedding of blood.* And so said *Elizabeth* unto the *B. Virgin*, *ver. 42.* of this Chapter, *εὐλογημένη σὺ ἐν γυναιξί*, *blessed art*, or *blessed be thou among women*, and *blessed is*, or *blessed be the fruit of thy womb.*

From all which I think it is plain, that all these expressions, *Hail, The Lord is with thee*, and *Blessed art thou amongst women*, are not peculiar, but common forms of speech, which were used in common conversation among the Jews.

And then for that word *κεχαρισμένη*, *thou that art highly favoured*, the Verb from whence this Participle doth come, is used by *S. Paul*, *Eph. 1. 6.* where it is written, *to the praise and glory of his grace*, wherein *ἐχαρίσεν ἡμᾶς*, *he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* The Vulgar Latin hath it, *in quâ gratificavit nos*, wherein he hath made us accepted. And accordingly *Theophylact* saith, that *κεχαρισμένη* in my Text, is explained by that exprellion, *ver. 10.* *εὐρετὶς δὲ χάριν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *thou hast found favour with God*, or *thou hast obtained favour of God.* Now in this sense of the word, as it signifies favoured, or accepted, *S. Paul* doth in effect say, in the fore-cited place, that every true and faithful Believer is *κεχαρισμένη*, favoured and accepted by God, or dear and acceptable to him in Christ. And this observation concerning the dear-ness, and acceptableness of all true Believers unto God, is very agreeable to what our Lord replied to him who told him, that his Mother and his Brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Our Saviour saith unto him, *Who is my Mother, and who are my Brethren?* And then stretching forth his hands towards his Disciples, he said, *Behold my Mother and my Brethren, for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven*, (the same is highly favoured) *the same is my Brother, and Sister, and Mother.*

Wherefore there is nothing in this signification of *κεχαρισμένη*, that might hinder an Angel from using it in saluting any true Disciple of Christ; especially if he were sent to give

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him notice of some particular favour, that God intended to bestow upon him; upon the special account whereof he might be said to have found favour with God. Thus Noah was *κεχαρισμένος*, as we read Gen. 6. 8. He above all mankind found grace, or favour, in the eyes of the Lord, when he resolved to destroy the world. It is in the Greek Translation, *Ναὶ ὁ κύριος χάριεν*, which is the very Phrase that Gabriel used to the Virgin, ver. 30. for thou hast found favour with God. So Abraham was *κεχαρισμένος*, or highly favoured of God, because he of all mankind was chosen to be the Father of the faithful, and was called the Friend of God. So Lot was *κεχαρισμένος*, or highly favoured, because God only spared him and his when he destroyed Sodom; and therefore saith he unto God, in this very phrase which Gabriel used unto the B. Virgin, Behold thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, Gen. 19. 19. So also Moses was *κεχαρισμένος*, because he of all the Hebrews was chosen to be the Deliverer of Israel, and the Mediator of the Old Testament, and had the special privilege of speaking to God, as a man doth to his friend face to face. Upon which account he said unto him in this very Phrase in which his Angel spake unto the B. Virgin; I know thee by Name, and thou hast found grace in my sight, Gen. 33. 12, 17.

The like might be said of many other Saints, as well as of the B. Virgin; and accordingly S. Paul, who of a Persecutor of the Church, had the honour to be chosen the Apostle of the Gentiles, said 1 Cor. 15. 10. by the grace, or favour of God, I am that I am. And therefore the title of *κεχαρισμένος*, thou that art highly favoured, as it is explained by *εὐχάριστος*, hast found or obtained favour, hath nothing in its signification so singular to the B. Virgin, but that it may be applied to any other Saint, who hath received any special favour, or honour from God.

But then there is another acceptation of *κεχαρισμένος*, as the Verb *χαρίζω* comes from *χαῖρ*, in that signification wherein it is taken for Vertue or Grace; and in this sense it may be rendred, thou that art very gracious. And so it is rendred by the Vulgar Latin, *Ave gratiâ plena*, Hail thou that art full of grace, or vertue. And in this signification also there is nothing peculiar, and singular in it, but what in equivalent terms hath been spoken of other Saints, as well as of the B. Virgin.

Thus it was said of Noah, that he was a just man, and perfect

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in his generation, Gen. 6. 9. And when God called him into the Ark, he said unto him, *Come thou and all thy house into the Ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.* I suppose if the Angel had said to the B Virgin, *Hail thou that art righteous before God, and perfect in thy generation,* it would have been every jot as Emphatical, as to say, *Ave gratiâ plena, Hail thou that art full of grace,* and as good an Argument to the full, to prove that she was free from sin. So the Lord himself gave this testimony of Job, chap. 2, 3. *That he was a perfect, and an upright man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil, and that there was none like him in the Earth;* which, considering who it was that spake it, I think implies as much innocence, and perfection, as *Ave gratiâ plena*, out of the mouth of an Angel, *Hail thou that art very gracious, or thou that art full of Grace.* So it is said of Zacharias, and Elizabeth, that they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments, and Ordinances of the Lord blameless, ver. 6. of this Chapter. So when our Lord saw Nathanael coming to him, he said, *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.* And this very Angel, that said unto the Virgin, *Ave gratiâ plena*, gave this Character of John the Baptist, that he should be great in the sight of the Lord, and be filled with the Holy Ghost from his Mothers womb, Ver. 15. So it is written of the Holy Martyr Stephen, that he was full of Faith, and of the Holy Ghost, Acts 6. 5. which I think is a Phrase of as much importance as to be full of grace; and might justify the speaking as high things of these Saints, as in reason can be said of the B. Virgin, to whom the Angel said in common terms of Salutation among the Jews, *Hail, thou that art highly favoured, or full of grace, the Lord is with thee, Blessed art thou amongst women.*

Having now shewed that there is nothing so peculiar in the Angel's Salutation but that he might have said the same to any other righteous person, I proceed to shew;

2. That the B. Virgin whom he Saluted in the foregoing words, was a very holy person; as may be shewn First in general: and Secondly in particular, from the History of the Annunciation, as it is set forth in this Chapter.

1. First then, it may be shewed in general, that she was a very holy person from the word *κεχαρισμένη*, whether it be rendred, *Thou that art highly favoured,* or *Thou that art full of grace.* It is not to be imagined, that an Angel should be sent from God, to give such a Title to any man or woman, but

who was a Saint of the first rank. But it is much more evident that she was such an one from the matter of his Message, or Annunciation, which was to tell her, that she should conceive and bring forth *Jesus* the Saviour of the World; and that the Holy Ghost to that end should come upon her, and the power of the Highest overshadow her; and that the Holy Child which should be born of her, should be the Son of God. Certainly the Holy Ghost would come upon none but a pure Saint; he that affects the Symbols of Innocence, and Purity, in all his appearances, and cannot enter into a malicious Soul, nor dwell in the Body that is subject unto sin, would not have come in that manner and for that mighty purpose, upon any Daughter of *Adam*, but who had cleansed her self from all filthiness of Flesh, and Spirit, and perfected holiness in the fear of God. Nay, God the Father, who was to prepare a Body for his Eternal Son, as it is written, *a Body hast thou prepared me*, would not form it of the substance of a sinful Woman, but his own essential Holiness, as well as the mysterious decency of the Dispensation would prompt him to form it of the substance of one, that like the King's Daughter in the *Psalms*, was all glorious within, and a pure and spotless Virgin, both in Body and Mind. We may be also assured from the holiness of God the Son, the Eternal Word of the Father, that he would not take upon him the Seed of *Abraham*, but of one of the genuine Daughters of *Abraham*; nor deign to be conceived in the Womb of any Woman, but of such an one, who was a Vessel of Honour, in whom the Spirit of God did dwell, and whose very Body was the Temple of the Holy Ghost.

She that was the Mother of God could not but be a very good Woman; She that conceived, and bare, and brought forth the Holy Child *Jesus*, the Virgin Mother of *Immanuel*, of whom the Prophet wrote as he was inspired, surely must have been pure, as he was pure, and holy, as he was holy.

For to use the Apostle's Phrase in another sense, the fulness of the Godhead could not dwell bodily in a wicked woman; nor could she be deceived and led away by the Serpent, whose Seed was to bruise the Serpent's head.

Nay to be chosen for the Mother of God, was the greatest honour and favour that ever God conferred upon any humane creature. None of the special honours and favours that he did to any of the Saints before or since, are equivalent to the honour

nour of being the *Mother of God*. And therefore we may be sure that God, who said, them that honour me I will honour, would not have done so great an honour to any daughter of *Abraham*, but to one who best deserved it, to one of the holiest among the daughters of *Israel*, to the most heavenly minded Virgin of the Tribe of *Judah*, and the Royal house of *David*; who had no superiour for holiness upon earth.

If we had no particular account of her graces, we might rationally conclude all this of her from the history of our Lord's Incarnation; for nothing less than Superlative holiness could receive such a Testimony of Divine honour from the Holy Trinity. She was as it were the Spouse of God, Co-parent with him of the wonderful *Immanuel*, who was God and man, God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds, and Man of the substance of his Holy Mother born in the world; perfect God and perfect Man, and yet not Two, but one Christ.

2. But then in the Second place, we have a particular account of many of those eminent graces which adorned her, in the Annunciation of the Angel, as it is related by *S. Luke*. As first of her Chastity, she was a *Virgin*, ver. 27. one that knew not a man, ver. 34.

Such a pure Virgin as was foretold by the Prophet, who said, a *Virgin shall conceive a son*, *Isa.* 7. 14. a Virgin in mind as well as body, such a Virgin as never looked upon a man to lust after him, an entire Virgin, who was all purity within as well as without, who never cherished unclean thoughts, nor let them grow into unchaste desires, but stifled the beginnings of Lust in its first motions, keeping her Body as the Sanctuary or holy place, and her Soul as the holiest of holies, and herself fit both in Body and Soul, to be the habitation of the Holy Ghost, and a Tabernacle for the Son of God. Secondly, we have an account of her great Modesty, and Humility, which put her into great disorder at the salutation of the Angel, when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and wondred what the meaning of his Salutation should be. She had nothing of the Pharisee in her, as doubtless many other Virgins had, who would upon such an Address have presently concluded in favour of their holiness, that it was so great and eminent above the holiness of other Virgins, that they deserved that peculiar honour of God. But she on the contrary was so very humble, that she was all blush without, and confusion.

fusion within, at the appearance and complement of the Angel. She wondred what should move God to send one of the Seven Spirits that attend upon his Throne to visit her. She wondred what should incline him to honour her so much, and why the Angel should speak unto her, as unto an holy person, and the favorite of Heaven. She had a greater sense of her humane imperfections, and infirmities, than of her virtues; and in so mean, and humble an opinion of herself could not imagine, why she should be *blessed* and praised above those of her own Sex.

So also in her *Magnificat*, which she delivered upon the Salutation of her Cousin *Elizabeth*, she admires, and adores the infinite condescension of God to her low Estate. And truly the signal honour which God did her, in chusing her for the Mother of his Son, is an argument according to the Scriptures, that she was lowly in Mind, as well as low in Fortune. For *God resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace*, (which is an Hebrew phrase for shewing favour) unto the lowly, saith Solomon, *Prov. 3. 34.* And saith the Prophet *Isaiab, 57. 15.* Thus saith the high and lofty one, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the hearts of the contrite ones. And this being the usual method of God's proceeding with the Sons of Men, we may conclude that the Virgin *Mary* was a very meek, and humble Maid, because God exalted her above her fellows.

The Third eminent Grace which we find in the Blessed Virgin, was her Faith, which was every way, as great as that of the Father of the Faithful, who being not weak in Faith, saith the Apostle, *Rom, 4. 17, &c.* considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb, but against hope, believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, not staggering at the promise of God, who can quicken the dead, and call those things which be not, as though they were. In like manner the Blessed Virgin, after the Angel had told her, that the power of the Highest should come upon her, staggered not at the Promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in Faith, being fully perswaded, that what he had promised, he was able to perform. She knew that he who formed *Adam* of the ground, and *Eve* of one of the Ribs of *Adam*; was also able to form the body of his Son of her Substance; and therefore though she knew not a man, she said

said unto the Angel, *Behold, the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word.* She knew it was most reasonable to rely on the word of Omnipotence, and essential truth, and in this She is commended above *Zacharias*, who did not believe the message of the Angel, when he told him that his Wife *Elizabeth* should bear him a Son. He objected that he was an old man, and his wife well stricken in years, forgetting that *Sarah* her self received strength to conceive *Isaac*, when she was past age; and therefore the Lord struck him with dumbness, because he believed not his words.

But though we read of no other Graces in her, yet we may be sure she had all the rest, that could render her righteous and acceptable in the sight of God. There must needs have been a noble Structure erected, upon such a foundation of Humility, Purity, and Faith; where these led up the dance, we may be sure the whole Chore of moral Virtues followed after. And therefore in the Third place,

3. It is our duty, who have the benefit of her example, to honour, and celebrate her Name, and commemorate her Virtues, and set forth her praises, in whom there was a concurrence of so many divine accomplishments, such a strong Faith, such abasing Humility, such pure Chastity, and all other Graces, in as much perfection, as was consistent with humane frailty.

So Divine, so Righteous a person ought to be had in everlasting remembrance, and *blessed among Women* from generation to generation. We ought not to mention her name without honour; her Name, which ought to be like precious ointment, wheresoever the Gospel is preached, and written in the biggest, and most conspicuous characters in the *Diptychs* of the Church.

If the Names of other Saints are distinguished with Miniature, Her's ought to shine with Gold. Especially if we consider that She, of all the Virgin-daughters of *Israel*, had the honour to be chosen by the Holy Trinity for the Mother of our Lord. What shall be done to the Woman, whom the King of Kings delighteth to honour? Certainly if we should hold our peace, and refuse to praise her among Women, the stones of the Church would cry out, *the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.* If what the woman did, who poured forth a box of precious ointment upon the head of our Saviour, was to be spoken of for a memorial of her, wheresoever the Gospel should be preach'd throughout the whole world;
fur ely

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surely that most *B. Virgin*, who had the honour to bring forth, and breed up the Son of God, ought to have a Festival, and be mentioned with all due reverence, and esteem, in all the Churches of the Saints. Wheresoever the Gospel is preach'd, that which she hath done, and suffered for our Lord, ought to be spoken of, for a memorial of her, from whom he took that very body, which was crucified, and that precious blood, which was shed for the remission of our sins.

4. But then in the Fourth place, though we ought to honour her, and have honourable thoughts, and make honourable mention of her, yet we ought to take care, that we do not honour her too much, in thinking and speaking more highly of her, than we ought to think and speak of a Creature. Indeed there is a particular respect due unto her, upon the account of her eminent Graces, and as she is the Mother of God. And so we find her Cousin *Elizabeth* treated her, with a particular respect under that Character, *whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come unto me?* But then we must not let our respect for her commence into Worship, nor Romance her into a Deity, because it was her Lot to be that Happy Virgin, of whom Christ was Born. We must not treat her upon the account of her singular Relation to *Immanuel*, as if she were an Infinite Majesty, or as if her graces were indeed Divine Attributes, and her prerogatives of Grace and Glory, as a late book asserts, *one and the same with those of her Son*. We ought not to pay such Homage, and Veneration to her under the Character of the *Queen*, as is only due to the *King* of Heaven, but we must carefully keep our respects to her Person, and Memory within due bounds and limits, lest transgressing herein, we should fall into those unwarrantable excesses, and abuses, which a great part of Christendom is too justly chargeable with.

*Epist. Dedicat.
to the Contem-
plations of the
V. Mary.*

And that I may not be accused of charging so great and considerable a number of our Fellow-Christians wrongfully, or of saying what I cannot prove, I shall spend the remainder of my pains in shewing, how extravagant the Votaries of the *B. Virgin* have been, and still are, in her Commendations, and Praises, and in the Honour which they pay, and the Devotions which they offer up unto her: And Secondly, in making a short Application of the whole discourse.

1. I shall shew how extravagant the Votaries of the Blessed Virgin are, both in word and deed, in the Honours which they pay

pay unto her, out of the Offices of the Latin Church, and the Antient and Modern approved Authors of her Communion, who speak such extravagant things of her, as in reality are a Dishonour to her, and a diminution of her and our Common Lord, and Saviour Jesus Christ.

To begin with the Offices of the Latin Church; in the form of Absolving a Penitent, in the Ritual the Priest con-

cludes with these words, *The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the B. Virgin Mary, and all Saints, all the good thou hast done, and the evil thou hast suffered, be unto thee for remission of sins, increase of grace, and the reward of Eternal Life, Amen.* So in many of her Offices there are these following Prayers.

* O blessed mother, and glorious Queen of the world, intercede for us unto the Lord, and || we fly unto thy protection, and safeguard, O holy mother of God, despise not our Prayers in our necessities, but always deliver us from all dangers, O glorious and Blessed Virgin. I think this is something more than to desire her to pray for us, as we do the faithful upon earth, through the merits of Jesus Christ. And so is the Hymn, *Ave maris stella*, which I shall render in the following words; *Hail Star of the † World and nursing mother of God, perpetual Virgin, and blessed gate of Heaven, Thou that receivest the Salutation; which was spoken by the mouth of Gabriel, and changeest the name of Eve, loose the bonds of guilty sinners, enlighten the eyes of the blind, drive away all evils from us, and ask all good things for us. Shew that thou art the Mother of Christ, and let him who was born of thee for us, and vouchsafed to be thy Son, receive our Prayers, through Thee, O most excellent, and humble Virgin; make us humble,*

C

Passio Domini nostri Jesu Christi, merita B. Mariæ Virginis, & omnium Sanctorum, quicquid boni feceris, & mali sustinueris, sint tibi in remissionem peccatorum, augmentum gratiæ, & premium vitæ æternæ, Amen.

* *Beata mater, gloriosa Regina mundi, intercede pro nobis ad Dominum. Offic. B. M. in Sabbato. & Offic. parv. B. Mariæ.*

|| *Sub tuum præstidium confugimus, sancta Dei Genetrix, nostras supplicationes ne despicias in necessitatibus, sed à periculis cunctis libera nos semper, Virgo gloriosa & benedicta. Offic. parv. B. M.*

† I render *Mariæ* by *world* according to the Exposition of Bernard in Sermon de Nat. Mariæ, and the Author of the Oration made in praise of the B. V. falsely ascribed to Epiphanius vol. 2. p. 292.

*Ave maris stella,
Dni Mater alma,
Atque semper Virgo,
Felix cali porta.
Sumens illud ave
Gabrielis ore
Fanda nos in pace,
Mutans Heve nomen.
Solve viscera reis
Profer lumen cæcis,
Mala nostra pelle,
Bona cuncta posce.
Monstra te esse Matrem,
Sumas per te preces
Qui pro nobis natus
Tulit esse tuus.
Virgo singulari,
chast,*

Inter omnes mites,
Nos culpis solutos
Mites fac & castos.
Vitam praesta puram,
Iter para tutum,
Ut videntes Jesum
Semper collemur.
Sit laus Dio Patri,
Summo Christo decus,
Spiritus Sancto,
Tribus honor unus. Amen.

Offic. B. M. in Sabbato & alibi.

You see they pray unto her here, as unto an Author, and Donor of Spiritual Blessings, and remind her of her power and influence over her Son. And so in another Hymn, they remind him of whom he took his Body,

Memento rerum Conditor,
Nostrum quod olim corporis
Sacra ad alvo Virginis
Nascendo formam sumpisti.
Maria Mater gratiae,
Dulcis parens clementiae,
Tu nos ab hoste proteges
Et mortis horam suscipe.
Jesu tibi sit gloria,
Qui natus es de Virgine,
Cum Patre & almo Spiritu,
In sempiterna secula. Amen.
Off. parv. B. M.

* O Gloriosa Virginum,
Sublimis inter sydera,
Qui te creavisti, parvulum
Lactente nutris ubere.
Quod Heva tristis abstulit
Tu reddis almo germine;
Intrent ut astra stebiles
Coeli recludis cardines.
Tu Regis alti janua,
Et aula lucis fulgida,
Vitam datam per Virginem.
Gentes redemptae plaudite.
Jesu sit tibi gloria, &c. Ibid.

† See the Reasons upon which this Office is founded in Durand's Rationale, l. 4. c. 1.

n. 31, 32, 33, 34, 35.

* Amplexamur Maria vestigia, fratres mei, & devotissimam supplicatione vultus illius pedibus provolvamur. Teneamus eam, nec di-

chast, and free from the bonds of our sins; give us purity of life, and grant us a safe passage into the next World, that we attaining the Beatifick Vision of Jesus, may rejoice with everlasting joy. Praise be given to God the Father, glory to Christ the Sovereign Lord, and to the Holy Ghost, to all three be one honour. Amen.

And then pray unto her, in the following manner, Remember O Creator of all things, that thou formerly tookest the shape of our Body, by being born of the holy womb of the Virgin. O Mary Mother of Grace, and sweet parent of mercy, protect us from the Enemy, and receive us in the hour of Death. Glory be to thee, O Jesus, who wast born of the Virgin, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

So in another Hymn they invoke her thus; * O Glorious Virgin, who art aloft among the Stars, thou nursedst thy Creator with the milk of thy Dugs, thou rearest unto us by the holy Branch, what Eve took from us, thou openest the Gates of Heaven, that penitents might enter in, thou art the Gate of the great King, the bright Palace of light. O redeemed Nations express your joy for the life that is given by the Blessed Virgin. Glory be to thee O Jesus, &c.

One of the Lessons for the † Saturday-Office of the B. Virgin begins thus; * My Brethren, let us embrace the footsteps of Mary, let us throw our selves at her feet, with most devout supplication;

Speculum Beatæ Virginis.

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cation; let us hold her fast, and not let her go, till she bless us, for she is powerful, &c.

And in another Office there is this Prayer *; The Lord bring us all unto the Kingdom of Heaven, by the merits and prayers of the perpetual Virgin Mary, and all the Saints. Amen.

In the Saturday-Office there is also this solemn Prayer of Intercession to her; || O Mary, Blessed Mother of God, perpetual Virgin, Temple of the Lord, Sanctuary of the Holy Ghost; Thou only without example, wast pleasing to our Lord Jesus Christ: Pray for the people, mediate for the Clergy, and intercede for the devout Female Sex. And then follows this Prayer unto God; * We beseech thee O Lord God, grant, that we thy Servants may enjoy perpetual soundness of body, and mind, and by the glorious intercession of the blessed, and perpetual Virgin, may be delivered from our present sorrow, and enjoy everlasting comfort, through our Lord.

In the Office for the Festival of her Conception, there is this Antiphone; || Let us celebrate the Conception of the B. Virgin with joy, that she may intercede for us with Jesus Christ. And this Address in Versicle, and Answer; * For thou art blessed, O holy Virgin, and worthy of all praise, because Christ our God the Sun of righteousness rose out of thee. O pray for the People, mediate for the Clergy, intercede for the devout Female Sex, and let all those who celebrate thy holy conception feel thy help.

In the Office of S. Mary ad Nives there is this Versicle and Answer, Vers. * make me worthy to praise thee, O holy Virgin, R. And give me power against thy enemies.

mittamus donec benedixeris nobis. Potens est enim, &c. Mense Q. S. Sermo, Bernardi Abbatis.

* Precibus & meritis B. Mariæ semper Virginis, & omnium Sanctorum perducatur nos Dominus ad Regnum Cælorum. Amen. Offic. parv.

|| O Beata Dei Genitrix Maria, Virgo perpetua, Templum Domini, Sacramentum Spiritus Sancti; sola sine exemplo placuisti Domino nostro Jesu Christo: Ora pro populo, interveni pro Clero, intercede pro devoto Famulo Sexu.

* Concede nos Famulos tuos, quesumus Domine Deus, perpetua mentis & corporis sanitate gaudere, & gloriosâ B. Mariæ, semper Virginis, intercessione, à præsentis liberari tristitiâ, & æternâ perfrui lætitiâ. Per Dominum.

|| Cum jucunditate Conceptionem B. Mariæ celebremus: ut ipsa pro nobis intercedat ad Dominum Jesum Christum. Breviar. Rom.

* Felix namque es sacra V. Maria, & omni laude dignissima: Quia ex te ortus est Sol iustitiæ Christus Deus noster. Ora pro Populo, interveni pro Clero, intercede pro devoto Famulo Sexu, sentiant omnes tuam juvamen, quicumque celebrant tuam sanctam conceptionem.

* Dignare me laudare te sacrata Virgo. Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos. Fest. S. Mar. ad Nives.

¶ Sancta Maria succurre miseris, juva pusillanimos, reserve debiles, ora pro populo — sentiant omnes tuum juvamen quicunque celebrant tuam sanctam festivitatem. Ibid.

* O B. Maria, quis tibi digne valeat jura gratiarum, ac laudum preconia rendere, quæ singulari tuo assensu mundo succurris perditis? Quas tibi laudes fragilitas humani generis persolvat, quæ solo tuo commercio recuperandi aditum invenit? Accipe itaque quasque exiles, quasque meritis tuis, impares gratiarum actiones: Et cum susceperis vota, culpas nostras orando excusa. Admitte nostras preces intra Sacrum exauditionis, & reporta nobis antidotum reconciliationis, ibid.

* The Contemplations, p. 60, 64, 66.

¶ Sit per te excusabile quod per te ingerimus, fiat impetrabile, quod fidè mente poscimus. Accipe quod offerimus, redona quod rogamus, excusa quod timeamus: quia tu es spes unica peccatorum. Per te speramus veniam delictorum, & in te beatissima nostrorum est expectatio premiorum. Sancta Maria succurre miseris, &c. Brev. Rom.

And then follows this Antiphone; ¶ O holy Mary, succour them that are miserable, help them that are weak-hearted, comfort those that are sorrowful, pray for the people, — and let those who celebrate thy holy Festival become sensible of thy help

In the second Day of the Octave of her Nativity, there is this Prayer, or Lesson. * O B. Mary, who can sufficiently give thee praise, and thanks, who by thy singular assent didst succour the world when it was undone? what praises sufficient can frail mankind pay unto thee who hast found a way of recovery, only by thy commerce with God? We therefore pray thee, receive our Thanksgivings how mean soever they be, and unequal to thy merits, and when thou shalt receive our Devotions, excuse our faults by praying. O admit our Prayers within the Sanctuary of thy audience, and bring back unto us the antidote of reconciliation.

What is meant in this Prayer by her succouring the world when it was undone, by her assent, I cannot tell, unless her acceptance of God's offer to be the Mother of Jesus, be to be understood by it, as a late approved * Book makes me think it is, which saith that God referred the execution of his Son's Incarnation to her acceptance, and thereby admitted her to a consultive and decisive suffrage in his Counsels.

But to proceed; the next lesson is a Prayer of the same strain in the following words; * Let every thing be excused which we bring unto God by thee, and let us obtain whatsoever we ask with a faithful mind. Accept that we offer, give that we ask, and pardon that we fear: because thou art the only hope of Sinners. We hope for the pardon of our offences by thee, and in thee is the most blessed expectation of our reward.

O holy Mary, succour those that are miserable, uphold those that are faint-hearted, comfort those that weep, pray for the people, and so forth as above-recited. And if this be not to derogate from the

the merits and mediation of our Lord, I know not what is.

In the Advent Sundays, this is a common Collect; || O God, who by the Annunciation of an Angel, wouldst have thy eternal Son assume flesh, of the substance of the Blessed Virgin Mary, grant to us thy Supplicants, that we who truly believe her to be the Mother of God, may be helped by her intercession with thee.

In the second Sunday after the Epiphany, there is this Prayer; * O Lord let this Communion cleanse us from sin, and make us Partakers of the heavenly remedy, by the intercession of the B. Virgin Mary the Mother of God.

In the Mass of her Assumption, there is this Prayer; * O Lord, let the Prayer of the Mother of God help thy People, and although we know she died, and was carried hence, yet let us perceive that she intercedes for us in heaven, by the same our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the proper Mass of her Seven Sorrows, she is called, * The Queen of Heaven, and Lady of the World, and what that signifies you shall have from a late Author, who saith that || Kings are the most noble Images of God's Majesty in the visible World, and Christian Queens the Representatives of the Mother of Jesus; according to which comparison it follows, that as the Queen is in proximity, privilege, power, authority, greatness and prerogative to the King of an Earthly Kingdom, so the B. Virgin is to God the King of Heaven, and Sovereign Lord of the World.

And therefore it is no wonder, that in the solemn Hymn, which begins, * Stabat Mater dolorosa, they as solemnly pray unto her to make them sensible of her sorrows, to make their hearts burn with the love of Christ, and to imprint his wounds upon them; to enable them to weep with her, and condole the crucified Jesus, to be wounded with his wounds,

|| Deus, qui de B. Mariæ Virginis utero, Verbum tuum, Angelo nuntiante, carnem suscipere voluisti: præsta supplicibus tuis, ut qui verè eam Genetricem Dei credimus, ejus apud te intercessionibus adjuvemur. Missal. Rom.

* Hec nos Communio, Domine, purget à crimine; & intercedente B. Virgine Dei Genetricis Maria, cælestis remedii faciat ejus confortes. Ibid.

* Subveniat, Domine, plebi tue Dei Genitricis oratio: quam etsi pro conditione carnis migrasse cognoscimus, in cælesti gloria apud te pro nobis intercedere sentiamus, per eundem, &c. Ibid.

* Cæli Regina, & Mater Mundi— Ibid.
|| Epist. Dedicat. to the Contemplations.

* In Missâ propria de 7. doloribus.
—Eja Mater sans amoris,
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac ut tecum lugeam.
Fac ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum
Ut sibi placeam—
—Fac me vere tecum flere,
Crucifixo condolere,
Donec ego vixero—

and

—Fac me plagis vulnerari,
Cruce hac inebriari,
Ob amorem Filii.

Inflamatus & accensus,
Per te V. sin defensus
In die iudicii.

Fac me Cruce custodiri,
Morte Christi praeuniri,
Conferri gratiâ.

Quando corpus morietur,
Fac ut anime donetur,
Paradisî gloria. Amen.

¶ Deus, qui per gloriosissimam Filii tui Matrem, ad liberandos Christi fideles à potestate Paganorum, novâ Ecclesiam tuam prole amplificare dignatus es: Presta quesumus, ut quam pie veneramus tanti operis institutricem, ejus pariter meritis & intercessione à peccatis omnibus & captivitate Demonis liberemur. Per eundem Dominum.

Missâ de B. V. M. de Mercede.

* Deus qui gloriosam Matrem tuam Mariam nominari voluisti: concede quesumus, ut qui dulce Marie nomen implorent, perpetuum sentiant tue benedictionis effectum. Qui vivis & regnas.

Missâ de Nomine B. V. M.

In the sixth of the

¶ De Maria accipitur (licet mihi dicere) quod scriptum est de Ecclesiâ: Relinquit homo Patrem suum, & Matrem suam, & adheret uxori suae: & erunt duo in carne una. Lect. 6. in secundo Nocturno Brev. Rom.

And accordingly in the Lesson for the Festival of her Assumption, and the Octaves thereof, they apply all that is said of the Church in the Song of Solomon to her, as if she were indeed the Spouse of Christ, and likewise those expressions of the King's Pride in the 45th Psalm, * which under the type of Solomon's marriage, prefigured the marriage of Christ to his Church.

and inebriated with the love of him, and to defend them in the day of judgment. They also pray her, to keep them by the Cross, to fortifie them by the death of Christ, to cherish them with her favour, and to grant that when their Souls depart from their Bodies, they may go into the glory of Paradise. And then solemnly say, Amen.

In another Mass they have this prayer: ¶ O Lord, who by the glorious Mother of thy Son hast vouchsafed to enlarge thy Church, with a new off-spring, to free the faithful in Christ from the power of Pagans; grant we beseech thee, that we who worship the Foundress of so great a work may be delivered, as well by her merits, as her intercession, from all our sins, and the captivity of the Devil, by the same our Lord.

In the Mass of her Name there is this Collect; * O God, who wouldst have thy glorious Mother named Mary, grant we pray thee, that those who implore her sweet Name, may find the perpetual effect of thy benediction, who livest and reignest, &c.

Octave of her Nativity, one Lesson begins thus; ¶ I may say that that which is written of the Church may be understood of Mary; A man shall leave his Father and Mother, and cleave to his Wife, and they shall be two in one flesh.

In

In the Octave of her Nativity, in the fourth Lesson of the first Nocturn, it is said; || Praise and

glory be given to thee, O Holy Trinity, who hast called us unto this celebrity. And praise be also unto thee, O holy Mother of God, for thou art the precious pearl of the world. And then it follows in the fifth Lesson; * By thee the holy Trinity is sanctified, and the precious Cross celebrated, and adored through the world; by thee Heaven doth exult, the Angels and Archangels rejoice, Devils are put to flight, and man is called back to Heaven, &c.

|| Laus & gloria sit tibi Sancta Trinitas, que omnes nos ad hanc celebritatem condonasti. Sit etiam tibi sancta Dei Mater laus. Tu enim es pretiosa Margarita, &c. Ibid.

* Per te Trinitas sanctificatur, per te Crux pretiosa celebratur, & adoratur in toto terrarum orbe. Per te, &c. Ibid.

I have taken all this, and might have taken more out of the reformed Missal, and Breviary, which a late small || Writer calls the *Authentick Books of the Church of Rome*. And in some of these Devotions you see, they pray unto her alone, as unto a Deity, to bless them, and to bestow Spiritual and Temporal Blessings upon them, saying in effect unto her, *Have pity upon us, hear our prayers, &c.* which the late French Expositor of the Catholick Doctrine saith, is the proper way of speaking unto God.

|| The Author of Popery anatomized.

In others of them they pray unto God the Father, through her Merits or Intercession, and so make her a collateral Mediatrix with Christ.

In others they pray unto Christ for her sake, and through her Intercession, and so make her an + Under-Mediatrix unto him.

+ According to Bernard, who saith, *Opus est*

enim Mediatore ad Mediatorem, nec alter nobis utilior, quam Maria.

In others they desire her to intercede with God for them, which also makes her a Joynt-Mediatrix with Christ.

In others they desire her to || intercede with Christ for them, which also makes her a subordinate Mediatrix to him.

|| So they pray unto S. Ambrose. Beate Ambrose, deprecare pro nobis Filium Dei.

In others they pray unto God through her Merits or Intercession by Christ Jesus, which seems to joyn her with him in the Office of Mediator.

In others they joyn several of these Forms together, contrary to the Scriptures, which direct us to pray unto none but God, and through no Mediator but Jesus Christ; and which positively teach, that as there is but one God, so there is but one Mediator betwixt God and man, the man Christ Jesus, and that he ever liveth to make intercession for us. Indeed they

they may well pray unto God, and Christ through her merits, who pray unto Christ through the merits of *S. Joseph* her reputed Husband, as they do on his Festival in the following

Sanctissima Genetricis tuae sponsi, quesumus, Domine, meritis adjuvemur: ut quod impossibilitas nostra non obtinet, ejus nobis intercessione donetur: Qui vivis & regnas cum Deo Patre. Brev. Rom.

Deus, qui Beatum Nicolaum innumeris decorasti miraculis, tribue, quesumus, ut ejus meritis & precibus, à gehennae incendiis liberemur per Dominum. Ibid.

Prayer, We pray thee, O Lord, that we may be helped by the merits of the Spouse of thy holy Mother, that what our weakness cannot obtain, may be given unto us by his intercession; who livest and reignest with the Father.

So they pray unto God through Christ, and *S. Nicolas* together in the following words; O God, who hast graced *S. Nicolas* the Bishop with many Miracles, grant we beseech thee, that we may be delivered from Hell-fire by his merits and prayers, through Christ our Lord.

But to return to the *B. Virgin*, I think it very agreeable to my present Subject and undertaking, to tell you the Story of her Assumption out of the Office, which I have so often cited, and which gives us this account thereof. When she died, all the Apostles, wheresoever dispersed to preach the Gospel, were suddenly caught up in the Air, and brought to *Jerusalem*. Being met together, a Vision of Angels appeared to them, and the Vision was attended with a sweet Psalmody of the heavenly Powers, in which the *B. Virgin* resigned her soul into the hands of God in a glorious manner, and the Angels, and Apostles continuing to sing together, her Body was carried out, and put in a Coffin, and buried at *Gethsemane*, where the Angels continued to sing three days together. At the end of three days, *Thomas*, who was not with the Apostles when she died, came to *Jerusalem*, and being desirous to worship the Body of the *B. Virgin*, they went to *Gethsemane* to take it up; but when they had opened the Grave, and the Coffin, to their great astonishment there was no Body there, and they all agreed in this opinion, that it had pleased the Word of God, and the Lord of Glory, who took his Body out of the *B. Virgin*, not to suffer hers to see corruption, but to do her the honour to translate it into Heaven, before the common, and universal Resurrection.

I cannot but observe here how well the Story of her Assumption is framed to answer to our Lord's Ascension, and how *Thomas* was absent at this meeting of the Apostles, just as he was at

at that in which *Jesum* stood in the midst of them, and shewed unto them his hands and his side. Poor unfortunate Apostle! that art always tardy, and canst never come in time to meet the rest of thy Brethren. But perhaps he was at the *Indies*, and had a greater journey than the rest, who were nearer to *Jerusalem*. I am as content as any man to admit this excuse, and if you farther desire to know what death the B. Virgin died of, the *Author of the Contemplations* will tell you, that she died of a *spiritual Feaver*, into which she fell through a *Seraphick* ^{P. 80.} *vehemency of divine love*, which inflamed her blood, and set her sacred heart on fire; and that her assumption was on this manner, *Her glorious soul*, saith he, *descended from her Imperial seat in Heaven*, accompanied with *Seraphims and chiefest Saints*, and re-assumed her sacred body, and ascended with it again, and placed it above all the troops of the blessed. Being ^{P. 84.} assumed in body and soul into heaven, she was seated on a Throne above all Seraphims, next to the most Glorious Trinity, and inaugurated, proclaimed, and acknowledged, *Queen of all pure creatures*, and at her Coronation she was clothed with the Sun, and had the Moon for her footstool, and was Crowned with an Imperial Crown of twelve Stars. And truly in some of her Offices, the *1st. verse of the 12th. chap. of the Revelations* is applied to her, where it is written, *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, † a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.*

† Vid. Bernard in Sermone de verbis Apocalyp. 12. 1. *Signum magnum apparuit in Cælo, mulier amicta Sole.*

To this account of her Assumption, I shall add another of the solemn manner of consecrating her Image out of the *Pontifical*, which I leave to every one of you to give what name, he thinks it best deserves. The *Bishop* in his Pontificals after the rehearsal of two Versicles, and Answers, sprinkles the Image with Holy Water, then he begins the Procession and an Antiphone [*One of the forecited prayers to her*] is sung. While this is doing, he *burns Incense before the Image* thrice waving the Censer before it. Then he sits down, and the Antiphones, and Psalms being ended, he says this prayer: * *O God, who didst vouchsafe to choose the virginal Palace of the blessed V. in which thou wouldest dwell, grant we beseech thee, that She may make us who are fortified by her Protection, to be joyfully present at her commemoration. Who livest, and reignest, &c.*

* Deus, qui Virgineam aulam B. M. Virginis in qua habitares, eligere dignatus es: da, quæsumus, ut sua nos defensione munitos, jucundos faciat sue interesse Commemorationi, qui vivis. Pontificale Romanum de Benedict. Imag. B.V. M.

D

Then

¶ Gloriosa Dei genetrix, Virgo, &c.
O glorious Mother of God, perpetual Vir-
gin Mary, who of all Virgins alone de-
servest to bear the Lord of all things, and
suckle the King of Angels, we pray thee to
remember us, and to pray unto Jesus Christ
for us, that being upheld by thy patronage,
we may deserve to come into the Kingdom
of Heaven.

* Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, cle-
mentissima cuius dispositione cuncta cre-
antur ex nihilo, hanc imaginem in ho-
norem piissimæ genetricis filii tui domini
nostri Jesu Christi venerabiliter adapta-
tam bene dicere, & sanctificare dig-
neris, & præsta, misericordissime pater,
per invocationem nominis tui, atque
eiusdem unigeniti filii tui Domini nostri
J. Christi, quam pro salute generis hu-
mani, Integritate Virginis M. servatâ,
Incarnari voluisti, quatenus precibus ejus-
dem sacratissimæ Virginis, quicunque
eandem misericordiam virginem, & grati-
ssimam dominam nostram coram hac effi-
gie suppliciter honorares studuerint, & de
instantibus periculis eruantur, & in con-
spectu divinæ Majestatis tuæ, &c. per
eundem dominum Ihesu Christum. etiam Pon-
tificale de Benedict. Imag. aliorum
Sanctorum.

Then after another Procession, and
singing another || Antiphone, and say-
ing one of the forecited prayers, he pro-
ceeds to consecrate the Image in the
following form : * Almighty everlast-
ing God, by whose most merciful dispen-
sation all things are created of nothing,
vouchsafe to bless, and sanctifie this Image,
which is venerably erected to the honor
of the most pious, [or affectionate] Mo-
ther of thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ,
and grant most merciful Father, by the
invocation of thy name and of the same
thy only begotten Son our Lord Jesus
Christ, whom thou wouldest have incarna-
ted for the salvation of mankind, pre-
serving the integrity of the Virgin Mary,
that by the prayers of the same most holy
Virgin, all those may be delivered from
instant dangers, and obtain Pardon in
the sight of thy Divine Majesty for their
sins of Commission, and Omission, and de-
serve the Grace which they desire to obtain
at present, and hereafter rejoice with thy
Elect in perpetual salvation, who shall
study to honour with Supplication before
this Image the same Queen of mercy,

and our most gracious Lady. By the same our Lord Jesus
Christ. I beseech you compare this form of Consecration
with the late Apologies for worshipping of Images, and then
see how they agree together, and consider especially whether
Consecrating a prepared Image to the honour of the Virgin
Mary, be not an act expressly forbidden by the Second Com-
mandment, and (as may be proved by numerous Authorities and
examples from Irenæus to Gregory the Great) contrary to the
Faith, and practice of the Ancient Catholick Church. And
as they consecrate Images to her, so they dedicate, and
consecrate all Churches and Altars conjunctly to God, and her
honour, and the honour of all Saints. At the Consecration of
Churches, the Bishop beginning behind the Altar, and going
on the right hand he anoints Twelve Crosses which are painted
on the walls of the Church with Chrism, and at every Cross
saith,

faith, * *Let this Church be sanctified, and consecrated in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to the honour of God, and the glorious Virgin Mary, and all Saints, unto the name and memory*

* Pontificale, de Ecclesie Dedicatione seu Consecratione. Et de Altaris Consecratione quæ fit sine Ecclesie Dedicatione.

of Saint N. The like Form is observed in dedicating of Altars, and in the Dedication of a Church, they also pray God to look with a serene countenance upon the place, by the intercession of her Merits, and all the Saints.

After this short account of the manner of their praying to her, and the History of her Assumption and Coronation, and the manner of consecrating her Images, and dedicating Churches, and Altars to her; I shall only remind you of the Divine Titles by which they invoke her in their Offices, as *Queen of Heaven, Queen of Mercy, Mother of Grace, Sweet Parent of Mercy, the Gate of the great King, the only hope of Sinners, our most gracious Lady; to which I may add, Queen of Angels, Adoptive Mother, Patroneß of Man, Advocate of Sinners, and more of the same nature in this Book of the Contemplations, where the Author addresles himself unto her in these words, I chuse thee, O glorious Mother of Jesus, to be my Patroneß, Advocate, and Adoptive Mother; admit me, O powerful Queen of Angels, among thy Clients, suppress my Enemies, manage my Cause in the Court of our Requests. — ah, permit not my Soul to perish, for which thy Son Jesus did shed those precious drops of blood, which he received from the rich fountain of thy loving heart.*

Page 12, 62.

Page 86.

Thus have I shewed you out of the Offices of the Latin Church, how extravagant the Votaries of the *B. Virgin* are in the honour, which they render unto her; and for which I am sure there is no ground, neither in my Text, nor in any other place of the holy Scripture; not in my Text, in which I shewed that there is not one word, but which the Angel might have used in saluting any other Righteous person, as well as the *V. Mary*; nor in any other place of Scripture, where she is mentioned: but on the contrary, there are many places which teach us, that we should not think of her above the condition of an humane Creature.

Thus at the Marriage in *Cana in Galilee*, when she told our Saviour there was no Wine, *Woman*, saith he, *what have I to do with thee?* When she said unto him, *Why hast thou dealt thus with us? thy Father and I have sought thee sorrowing*; he said

unto them, *How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?*

When a woman, in admiration of him, *lift up her voice and said, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked,* he answered, *Yea rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.* Another time when some told him, that his Mother and Brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him, he said, *Who is my Mother, and who are my Brethren?* and then stretching forth his hands towards his Disciples he said, *Behold my Mother, and my Brethren; for whosoever doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my Mother, and Sister, and Brother.*

When he saw his Mother standing by the Cross, and the Disciple whom he loved standing by her, he said no more unto her, but *Woman behold thy Son;* and to him nothing else but *Behold thy Mother.* In all these places Jesus treated her, not so much like a Mother, as a Disciple. And S. Paul having occasion to mention her, upon the account of Christ's Incarnation, saith no more than this, *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son; made of a WOMAN, made under the Law.*

Having now shewed out of the Latin Offices, how extravagant the Votaries of the *B. Virgin* are in the honours which they pay unto her, I proceed to shew the same out of the Antient and Modern approved Authors of the *Latin Communion*. But I shall begin with the Modern, and particularly with the Contemplations on her Life and Glory; where the Author calls her || *Queen of Seraphims, and Queen of Heaven,* and saith that, *whatever can be said of her, will be infinitely too narrow to fill the Orbs of her exuberant Sanctity, Grace, and Glory;* and that with trembling he attempted to explain the mystery of her *Life and Glory, lest searching into the holies of so great a Majesty, he should be oppressed with its splendors.*

He saith, *It is impossible for a pure Creature to unfold the immense Attributes of her Maternity.* And truly they cannot but be immense, if the *Prerogatives of Grace and Glory* in her, and *Jesus* are not distinct Perfections, but one and the same Attribute, as he proves out of one of their own Writers. He saith that, *Whatever gifts are bestowed upon us by Jesus, we receive them by the mediation of Mary, and that she hath full power, as a Mother, to obtain of her Son whatever he can ask of God the Father; and that no one ever petitioned her, who was refused by him,*

|| Epist. Dedicat.

him, or trusted in her, who was abandoned by him; and that, he Pag. 16.
blesseth those whom she blesseth, and owns them for his Disciples,
whom she adopts for her Children.

This is a new sort of Divinity, which the Apostles and
their Scholars never taught the World. They told us but of
one Mediator in Heaven, to whom we should immediately ap-
ply our selves, but here we are told of two, of *Jesus* who is
a Mediator with God the Father, and of *Mary*, who is as pow-
erful a Mediatrix with *Jesus*, as he is with his Father; and
if this be true, it is no matter to which of the two we pray,
or whether we pray to him or no, since no one ever petitioned
her, who was refused by him.

He further saith, that *Her sacred Body is endowed with a* Pag. 96.
supereraphical activity, whereby she can render her self present in
a moment, to all her Votaries, and aid them at any distance; and
upon these two suppositions of her full mediatory power, and
presence in all places, we need not wonder at the following
Devotions.

V. Open my lips, O Mother of *Jesus*.

R. And my Soul shall speak forth thy praise.

Pag. 23.

V. Divine Lady, be intent to my aid.

R. Graciously make haste to help me.

V. Glory be to *Jesus* and *Mary*;

R. As it was, is, and ever shall be.

* *Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us now and in the hour* * Pag. 24.
of death. Bid us be blessed, O holy Mary. And, || O sacred || Pag. 101.
Virgin, Mother of God, Queen of Angels, Empress of Saints,
Refuge of Sinners, and my special Patroness and Advocate, unto
thy custody I commit and recommend my self, with all the powers,
passions, and motions of my Body, and Mind; and all living and
dead, especially those whom I would or should pray for, humbly
intreating thee, through all thy mercies, and merits, thy privi-
leges, and power, and by whatever is dearest unto thee, that we
may be admitted to be thy Children, Servants, and Devotes,
that we may be protected, directed, assisted, and comforted by
thee; and that by thee we may be presented to God the Father,
God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; with much more, too
long to be transcribed. To which I shall add this Blessing.

* *Through the merits and intercession of the Mother of Jesus,* * Pag. 24.
we may come to the harbour of eternal Salvation; and this,

† *Through the mediation of the most glorious Virgin Mother of* † Pag. 103.
Jesus, may God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, bless and keep

Pag. 23.

us now and for evermore. And this Cantique, *Let us praise thee, O Mother of Jesus, let us acknowledge thee our Sovereign Lady, let men and Angels give honour to thee, the first conceived of all pure Creatures, to thee the Morning-Stars, and highest Seraphims sing glory for thy Magnificence, make intercession for us, O powerful Mother of Jesus, for God will not refuse thee our Petitions, then shall we rejoyce in the fulness of thy Glory, and shall sing the Praises of Jesus for ever.*

You may perceive by the Stile of this Cantique, that it was compos'd in imitation of the *Te Deum*; of which I shall speak more hereafter.

From the Contemplations I pass to the Psalter of the B. Virgin *Mary*, which was compos'd in the *French Tongue*, by a Father of the Society of *Jesus*, and translated into *English*, and Printed with allowance in 1624; out of which I shall present you with a few Petitions, to which I need not crave your attention.

1. Petition.

“O glorious Virgin, grant me Grace, that I may receive
 “pardon for my sins, draw near unto me, O Blessed Virgin,
 “who art the Mother of the afflicted, my Enemies are gathered
 “together against me, and I have this only refuge to cast
 “my self under the shadow of your wings, defend me against
 “their enterprizes, and bring them all to shame and confusion.
 “Your Majesty and Greatness, together with the incredible
 “sweetness of your infinite mercy, have oblig'd my lips
 “to publish the praises of no other than of your self. Be
 “you glorified, O most amiable Virgin, together with your
 “sweet Son *Jesus*, both now and evermore. Give my Soul
 “entrance into Paradise, when it shall leave the Body, and
 “by your holy prayers deliver me from the dreadful pains of
 “Hell; and let all that is due unto me for my sins be cancelled
 “by your merits. You have been the cause that God took
 “humane Flesh upon him, you then as a Mother can obtain for
 “us all that which we ask of him. — He will pardon us
 “for the love of you — Remember our humanity, and
 “grant that we may find grace with you, who art the Foun-
 “drefs of our Grace and Salvation. Stretch forth your hand
 “to draw me out of the filthiness of my sins, and let the great-
 “ness of your mercy blot out the multitude of my offences,
 “supplying by your merits, what in justice I dare not demand.
 “Turn not your face away from me, for I put my trust in you.

2. Petition.

“You are the Sanctuary into which I desire to retire —
 “I magnifie

"I magnifie you as the Foundress of Grace; I will never cease
 "to beseech you with all my desires, and affections — until
 "I know that you have beheld me with compassion, and gi-
 "ven ear to my prayers. I will humble my heart before you,
 "for I know that the proud shall not be entertained near unto
 "your *Sacred Majesty* — If you do not undertake our de-
 "fence, how shall we do to appear before *Jesus*? — put
 "words into my mouth that I may worthily praise you, since
 "the Heavens themselves set forth your Glory, and that all
 "Creatures call upon you, when they are oppressed — as
 "soon as you extend your hand upon the sick, they are healed,
 "and the Waves of this troublesome World are soon appeased
 "by your commandment. — I will never cease to praise
 "and exalt you with Hymns, Psalms, and Canticles, but day
 "by day will I render you my Vows. Receive my Soul into
 "your hands when it shall leave this mortal Body, and take
 "it into your protection, for it will be lost with fear, and will
 "not know to what side to turn to save it self, unless under
 "the shadow of your mercy. Obtain for me by your Grace a
 "place of perpetual habitation, among those who be in Para-
 "dise, there to enjoy the felicity, which the Souls of those
 "who have devoutly served you, do eternally possess. || O bles- || 3. Petition.
 "sed Virgin, *Mother of unlimited Power*, adored and called
 "upon by the Universe, give me strength to resist the tem-
 "ptations of my invisible enemies — if you should have for-
 "saken me, to whom should I have then repaired, that would
 "have looked upon me with pity and compassion, I will confess
 "your Name among all Nations, because it is holy — and
 "will make known to all, the *Majesty* of your Greatness.

All the fifteen Petitions in this Psalter are full of such like
 Devotions: and the last of them concludes thus,

"Be pleased with my Prayers, O sacred Virgin, and may
 "it please you not to reject this little Psalter dedicated to your
 "*Sacred Majesty*, a part whereof I will recite before you eve-
 "ry day, to the end you may receive my Soul into your Bosom,
 "when it shall depart out of this World into another Life.

I must further acquaint you, that this Author who made this
 Psalter in imitation of the Psalter of *David*, adviseth his Reader
 to say these Psalms before an Image of the Blessed Virgin *Mary*
 in some holy place, or Oratory; and before every Petition to
 say the *Ave Maria* in English, and the Translator of it doth as-
 sure the Lady, to whom he Dedicates it, that it had the ap-
 probation.

probation of the better sort of Catholicks, and was presented to one of the greatest Queens of Europe in its French attire.

The Author also tells us, that he hath put the *Angels salutation* before every Petition, to implore the favour of the Sacred Virgin, and this he did conformable to the *Latine Offices*, which abound with *Ave Marias*, though I profess I cannot tell, why they should convert a pure Salutation, which I have shewed consists of common forms of speech, into a form of Invocation. Why should that, which might have been spoken by the Angel in saluting any other righteous person be esteemed such an acceptable Sacrifice of Praise to her? and yet the Mystery of the holy *Rosary*, which we are || told the blessed Virgin revealed to *Dominic* [I must be pardoned that I cannot add Saint] consists in saying one *Pater noster*, and ten *Ave Marias* at a time, with one Prayer to the Virgin *Mary*, after a Meditation upon something that happened, or that they say happened to her, and I must confess, I cannot understand, how any Office, wherein there are ten, or eleven Invocations of *Mary* for one Prayer to God, || should be most efficacious for obtaining all favours from him, and averting all evils from our selves. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, I cannot attain unto it, but I must for ever be content to be ranked || among those babes who are to be fed with milk, and not with such strong meat. My stomach will not digest it, I have not been hitherto able to bear it, neither yet am able, nor to beg her intercession, or hope to obtain the assistance of the Holy Ghost by saying an *Ave Maria* to her; I neither understand nor believe how the repetition of the *Angels message* can warrant the expectation of such blessings from God by the Mediation of the B. Virgin, nor can I perswade my self to say with the *Votaries of Loretto*, we fly to your patronage O Sacred mother of God, despise not our prayers in our necessities, but deliver us from all dangers, O ever-glorious, and blessed Virgin.

|| Cardinal *Bona* a late, and most approved Writer of the Latin Church tells us, that the *Rosary* is so called, because it is composed of 150 *Ave Marias*, as of so many sweet-smelling Roses; as if the 15 *Pater noster*s in it did not smell as sweet as they: and though he is one of the approvers of Mr. *de Meaux*'s his Exposition, which saith, they only pray to Saints to pray for them, yet in his || Paraphrase on the Angels Salutation, he saith very extravagant things of her, and in another place prays unto her, as unto a Donor in the following words,

“Protect

|| In the Advertisement before the method of saying the *Rosary*.

|| Ibid.

|| 1. Sermon. p. 6.
Sermon. 6 p. 5.

|| *Horolog. Aſcet.*

|| Ibid.

"Protect me, O sweetest Virgin *Mary*, under the shadow of
 "thy wings, and never let thy name, which flows with ho-
 "ny, depart from my mouth, and heart, be not far from me,
 "O most powerful mother of God, because my enemies com-
 "pass me round about. What can I do without thee, O blef-
 "sed Virgin, or what would become of me, if thou shouldst
 "turn away thy face from me? When wilt thou come, O most
 "sweet Virgin, when wilt thou appear to thy most unworthy
 "servant? Thy breath, O *Mary*, is sweeter than honey, and
 "the possession of thy love above Gold, and precious Stones.
 "Let my Soul perceive the sweetness of thy Love, and be al-
 "ways employed in thy praises, because thou art my comfort
 "next after God. Have compassion on my Soul, that breaths
 "after thee, have a regard unto me, and make hast to
 "help me. Grant me thy grace, that I may always rejoyce
 "in thee, and after this time of exile, behold thee in glory.
 "My Soul breatheth after thee, as a child doth after the bosom
 "of his mother, O despise me not thou mother of mercy.
 "How vehemently do I desire to see thy face, O most beautiful Vir-
 "gin, take me up quickly unto thee, and fulfil my desire. Who
 "can forbear loving of thee, O Queen of hearts, and mother
 "of holy love, who can forbear loving of thee? O that all
 "creatures might serve thee, and live, and dy in thy love.
 "Receive my heart O most beloved mother, and offer it with
 "thy most holy hands to thy most holy Son. I rejoyce, and
 "exult, O blessed Virgin, that God loveth thee above all his
 "works, and am delighted with it above all things, and I had ra-
 "ther undergo the pains of hell, than that thy glory, and dig-
 "nity should be the least diminished for a moment of time.
 "Let all that know thy name, trust in thee, O Glorious Vir-
 "gin, because thou dost not forsake those, that trust in thee.
 "Let the Light of thy Countenance appear unto me in my A-
 "gony, and let thy comfort (most merciful mother) make
 "glad my departing Soul.

I might here add his Prayers to Saints and Angels in the
 like strain, and his Invocation of the Five wounds of Christ;
 but my present undertaking obliges me only to take notice
 of the extravagant honour, which the Votaries of the Blessed
 Virgin are wont to pay unto her.

From Cardinal *Bona*, I proceed to *Ferdinand Salazar* for-
 merly Expositor of the holy Scriptures in one of the Spanish
 Colleges of Jesuites. This Author wrote an Exposition in

Folio on the Proverbs of Solomon, which was licensed both in Spain, and France; and published at Paris 1637. In his Work he hath applied a great part of the Proverbs to the Blessed Virgin, and spoken most extravagantly of her. He saith, † That her Kingdom, and jurisdiction is commensurate to that of Christ's, by a devolution of the Son's Empire unto the Mother; That Kings are her Viceroy, and that it is lawful to pronounce of her, as of him, Per me Reges regnant, by me Kings reign, and Princes deserve judgment; by me Princes rule, and Nobles, even all the Judges of the Earth.

† Pag. 250.

* Pag. 258.

He saith *, We do not know what to pray for as we ought, nor how, and therefore it is most for our interest to pray so her to pray for us, and a more sure, and ready way of finding help to call upon her than to call upon Christ. For this he cites Anselm, and saith it also seems to be the meaning of their Church in those words, That we, who cannot please thee by any of our own acts, may be saved by the intercession of the Mother of thy Son.

|| Pag. 255.

* Pag. 580.

He saith ||, That other Saints pray but for some persons, but she prays for all by name, and that the prayers of the Saints can obtain nothing for us without hers; That we * ought not only to put on Christ according to S. Paul, but so put on Mary according to S. Bonaventure: and, That as a Garment dyed in Scarlet becomes more beautiful, when it is dyed again in Grain; so the love of God is made more venust, and splendid by the love of the V. Mary: That, † there was a kind of emulation, and jealousy between the Holy Ghost, and Joseph, which should do most for her, and that there is one flesh and blood of her, and her Son, and that whosoever in the Holy Eucharist doth worthily eat of the one, doth also partake of the other; That * he, and she offered one Holocaust to God, and that if he had not expressed his own willingness so suffer for us, her will had been a sufficient declaration of it, because he is supposed to will, whatsoever she would.

† Pag. 563.

* Pag. 262.

There is much more such extravagant Stuff in this Expofitor, which he supports by the Authority of Bernard, Bonaventure, Anselm, Damascen, and such like Writers. But because it is too long to be transcribed, I pass on to John Peckham, formerly Archbishop of Canterbury, who at the end of the Preface to this Psalter of the Blessed Virgin not yet printed, prays her, that she would be pleased to release the sins of all those for whom he prayed, and cause both his name, and theirs to be written in the Book of Life. In the first Psalm of it he prayeth her to make us so much as often to God's Law, and so be made blessed in the

Usher's Answer
to a Challenge,
Rc. p. 493

the glory of his kingdom, and all the rest are filled with Petitions of the like nature. From Peckham I go on to Cardinal Bonaventura, who shines in the Calendar of the Latin Saints. He flourished about 430 years since, when Superstition was in its Zenith, and darkness covered the face of the earth. He wrote several Tracts in honour of the Virgin Mary, one called the Blessed Virgin's || mirthour, which is a most extravagant Paraphrase upon the Angels Salutation, wherein he applies to the Blessed Virgin in the Mystery, whatever is literally said of Queen Esther, and the Queen of Sheba in the holy Scriptures. He observes, that her Name signifies, *Lady*, and that it agrees very well to so great an Empress, who is Queen of Angels, Men and Devils, and of things in Heaven, things in Earth, and things under the Earth; and in the conclusion of the Prologue to his *Mirthour*, he thus bespeaks her: *O most benign Lady Mary, accept of this small gift, which my poor friend offers up unto thee. I salute thee with this little Book upon my bended knees, and with my bowed head, I salute thee with heart, and mouth, and say, AVE MARIA.* He composed another Office called the Crown of the blessed Virgin, where one of the *Orisons* prescribed to be said unto her, is as follows, *O Empress and our most kind*

|| *Speculum*
beata Virginis.

Lady, by the authority of a mother || command thy most beloved Son our Lord Jesus Christ, that he would vouchsafe to lift up our minds from the love of earthly things unto heavenly desires. The harshness of this petition is a little qualified in another * Edition thus, *Incline the countenance of thy Son upon us, compel him by thy Prayers, to have mercy upon us sinners.* Which puts me in mind of that

|| *Jure matris impetra tuo dilectissimo filia. Corona B. Virginis.* Tom. 6. Edlt. Rom. 1588. To which add the complaint of *Cassander* in consult. de merit. & intercessi. Sancti. Quin. & ed. ventum est ut etiam Christus jam in Caelo regnans matri subijceretur; quo modo in nonnullis Ecclesiis canitur, *Ora Patrem, & jube filium, O salix Purpura, jure matris impetra, nostra piaus Scelera, Redemptori.*

* *Psal. Baran. edit. Paris. 1596.*

sentence of *Anselm* in his Treatise of the Excellence of the B. Virgin, that more present relief is sometimes found by commemorating the name of Mary, than by calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus her only Son. This extravagant saying of *Anselm* || *Answer to a* hath been since used by another of the Virgins Votaries || *as Challenge, p.* Bishop Usher observes.

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But to return to Cardinal Bonaventura, he hath made many other Offices in the Virgins praise, of which, that which he calls the *Psalter* of the blessed Virgin is most remarkable. It consists of the *Psalms* of David converted into Forms of

Prayer, and Thanksgivings, and Praises unto her by putting *Lady* in the place of *Lord*. The first verse of the 93. Psalm is this, *Deus ultionum Dominus, sed tu mater misericordiae ad miserandum inflectis*; *God is a God of vengeance, but thou, O mother of mercy, art inclined to shew mercy*. At the end of this Psalter he hath transposed the Hymns of the Church, the *Benedicite*, the *Benedictus*, and the *Te Deum* into her praise, which begins thus: "We praise thee the mother of God, we acknowledge thee to be a Virgin, all the earth doth worship thee, the Spouse of the eternal Father, all Angels, and Archangels, all Thrones, and Powers do faithfully serve thee, to thee all Angels cry aloud, with a never-ceasing voice, holy, holy, holy *Mary* Mother of God — the whole Court of heaven doth honour thee as Queen, the holy Church throughout all the World doth invoke and praise thee the *Mother of Divine Majesty*, &c. Nay he hath also Transposed the *Athanasian* Creed into a form of Confession to her honour, and it begins thus: "Who-soever would be saved, before all things it is necessary, that he hold a firm Faith concerning *Mary*; which Faith except every one do keep whole, and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly; and then though her *Assumption* into Heaven, her sitting at the right hand of Christ, and never ceasing to pray for us, be made Articles of that Creed, yet it concludes thus: *This is the true Faith concerning Mary; which except a man believe firmly, and faithfully, he cannot be saved.*

† Inter opusc.
scripta Cy-
priano, Ed.
Oxon. 1682.

From *C. Bonaventure* I go on to *Arnoldus Carnotensis*, who lived about Five hundred years ago, and wrote an extravagant † Tract, in the praises of the blessed Virgin, in which he saith, that if he had the Tongues of Men, and Angels, he could not worthily set forth the glory of the holy, and ever-blessed Virgin. He saith, She is exalted above all Creatures; and that whoever bows his knee to Jesus, must also fall prostrate before Mary; he saith, they have both one flesh, one Spirit, and one love, and one glory; that she cannot be separated from his dominion, and power, and that they both stand before the face of God to intercede for us, and obtain remission of sins.

From *Arnoldus*, I proceed to *Bernard*, who flourished almost Six hundred years ago. He was bred a Monk in a dark Age, and his Sermons of the Virgin *Mary's* assumption are full of very extravagant, and unwarrantable expressions. He calls
her

her the *Queen of Heaven*, and *Queen of Mercy*, and *Lady of all things*. He saith, "When she ascended on high, she also gave good gifts unto men, seeing she neither wanted power, nor will: Not power, because she was the Mother of God; nor will, because all her Bowels were Charity. He talks much about her Coronation, and saith, "That no man can find out the length, and breadth, and height, and depth of her mercy; and that Christ bestows all his gifts and graces through her, and exhorts us to give God thanks, who in mercy provided us such a *Mediatrice*; and in short, what apprehensions he had for her, may be seen from a Prayer, which begins thus: "We lift our hearts, and eyes, and hands unto thee, O Queen of the World, we kneel, and bowe before the Glory of thy Highness, and send up our prayers with sighs unto thee to Heaven. The rest of the prayer is like the beginning, and towards the latter end of it he hath this expression, "Speak, O Lady, for thy Son hears, and will grant whatsoever thou shalt ask. He also calls her the *Star of Jacob*, and saith, that as without the Body of the Sun, there would be no day; so without Mary, Maris Stella, the Star of the World, there would be nothing but darkness, and the shadow of death.

There are also many such extravagant and unwarrantable things said of her, and many prayers directed unto her in the Homilies de Tempore upon Christ's Nativity, and the Homilies de Sanctis, especially in that of the Assumption falsely ascribed to S. Augustin, as the Writers of the Latin Church are forced to acknowledge.

I have also omitted the extravagant Sayings, and Notions about her in the School-men, as that of † Gabriel Biel, who † Ex Cassandro in Consult. de Meritis, & intercessione Sanctorum. saith, That the Promise of King Abashuernus to Esther, of giving her what she should ask to the half of his Kingdom, was fulfilled in her, upon whom God bestowed half of his Kingdom, which consists of Justice and Mercy, parting with his Mercy to her, and reserving Justice for himself. So Suarez saith, that her || Grace was greater in the first moment of her Conception, than the Grace of the highest Angel; and that in the second it was doubled, and so increased in Geometrical proportion unto her life's end; and that she was dearer to God than the whole reasonable Creation, and that he loved her more than the Universal Church. I also forgot to tell you of the Bible which is made, and printed to her honour, called *Biblia Maria*,

|| Suarez 3. p. Disp. 18. S. 4.

Maria, in which most of the chief passages relating to God and Christ in every Book of the true Bible are applied to her.

I have also passed over the many Legendous Stories that are told of her; and to shew how dangerous it is for men to magnifie her above the condition of an humane Creature. I think I may tell you of C. *Scribanus*, Provincial of the Belgick Je-

* *Hæreo lac inter medians interq; crorem,
Inter delicias uberis, & lateris, &c.*

There is also such a Copy of Verses in *Gargus* his *Pia Hilaria*.

suits, who in a rapture of Devotion to the Blessed Virgin, made a Copy of * Latin Verses, wherein he equals the benefits, and merit of her milk to that of his blood. I have also omitted to shew

how they apply unto her the most eminent passages of Scripture, which directly belong to Christ, particularly the whole eighth Chapter of the *Proverbs*, which was always understood of the Eternal Uncreated Wisdom of God. I have likewise omitted to tell you of the several miraculous Victories † she hath given to that side she espouses, as to *Philip* King of France against *Otho* the Emperor, to *Philip le Valois*, and *Philip la Bel* against the *Flemings*, to the Cities of *Tournay*, *Ipres*, *Orleans*, and *Poitiers* against the *English*, and to the Christians against the *Turks*.

† *D^r Breujn's*
Saul and Sa-
muel, p. 113.

I have also omitted their Ancient Offices, in which there are prayers to S. *Jochim* the Father, and to S. *Anne* the Mother of the Blessed Virgin, wherein they put * her in mind of the power she hath by her Daughter, and tell him, || that his Nephew *Jesus*, and his Daughter *Mary* will deny him nothing.

* *Breviar. Sar.*
July 26.
*O vas celestis
gratia, Mater
Regine Virgi-
num, memento,
Mater inclita, quam potens es per filiam.* || *Brev. Rom. Aniq. Mart. 20. O Pater summe Jo-*
achim puella— potes omne si vis, nihil Nepos Jesus merito negabit, nil tibi nata.

But you will perhaps say, that the *Latin Church* hath laid aside these Devotions: God be thanked for it, and grant the happy time may come when she will lay aside all the rest, that I have cited after the example of this truly Catholick, and Apostolick Church, of which we are Members; but then though she hath laid them aside, yet since she formerly allowed, and approved them, she must, as a learned * Author observes, be answerable for them, till she acknowledges she was mistaken. The rejecting and reforming of these, and

* The Author
of the R. De-
votions.

|| As of S. *Ju-
lian* in *Mist. se-
cund. usum Sarum*. *Rothom. Edit. S. Batilde* *ibid.* *S. Scholastica* *ibid.* *S. Potentiana* *ibid.* *S. Al-*
delmus *ibid.* *S. Martin* *ibid.* *and Conf. ibid.* *S. Sabina* *ibid.* *S. Andoenna* *ibid.*

bility,

bility, which I observe in answer to that Plea, which saith, it is most reasonable for men to be of the Infalible Church. I confess a man were mad, that would not rather be of an infalible, than a Fallible Church; but then it is obvious to reply, That it is one thing for a Church to be Infalible, and another for her, or others, to say she is so; nay, I desire to know if any Church is ever a jot the more Infalible for pretending to Infalibility; or if those men do not act rationally, who chuse to continue under the care of Learned and modest Physicians, that own themselves Fallible, rather than commit themselves to those, who give out Bills of this, or that *Infalible Cure*.

Thus have I shew'd you from the Ancient and Modern approved Authors of the *Latin* Communion, how extravagant the Votaries of the Blessed Virgin are in the honours they pay unto her; and as I shewed before, that there is no ground for them in Scripture: So I am sure there is none in the First and pure Antiquity for above Three hundred years, as will appear from the manner, in which the ancient Fathers mention'd her, when they had occasion to speak of her.

S. Ignatius in his Epistle to the Ephesians, mentions her by the name of plain *Mary* in the Scripture-stile, saying, *These three great Mysteries, the Virginity, and bringing forth of Mary, the death of the Lord, were conceal'd from the Ruler of this World.* Justin Martyr, who mentions her so often in his Works, upon occasion of giving an account of our Lords Conception, and Birth, never calls her by any greater Title than the Virgin, or the Virgin *Mary*. * S. Irenaeus mentions her by no other name. || Dionysius Alexandrinus calls her the Holy Virgin *Mary*, and Mother of God. The Author of the *Questions*, &c. falsely ascribed to Justin Martyr, calls her the || most happy or Blessed Virgin. * Tertullian, whom I should have nam'd before, calls her nothing but the Virgin, or *Mary*, or the Virgin *Mary*, when he was tempted to speak magnificently of her against Jews, and Hereticks. * Origen in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans calls her the Mother of God. † Eusebius calls her *Mary* in one place, and the Mother of God in another. Alexander Bishop of Alexandria calls her the Mother of God. * S. Athanasius sometimes calls her *Mary*, sometimes the Virgin *Mary*, sometimes the Holy Virgin, and sometimes the Mother

* L. 3. c. 3. l. 7. c. 37.

|| Ep. ad. Paul. Samaritan.

|| Maximus *tragedia*.

* De Virgin. veland. de carne Christi, adversus Praxeam, adversus Jodanos.

* Socrat. hist. Eccles. l. 7. c. 37.

† Euseb. l. 1. c. 7. de vit. Const.

l. 3. c. 43.

* 1. vol. ad epist. de incar. verb. Dei, 2. vol. p. 298.

Mother

† Ep ad Epist.
& 3. Orat.
cont. Arr.

* Orat. 18.

† Καὶ τὴν παρ-
τίαν Μαλαμ
ἐκείνου Bon-
θίου παρτίαν
καὶ κινδυνισ-
αγ.

* Dallius ad-
vers. Latin. c.
8. p. 51.

Mother of God. And how far he was from calling of her *Queen of Heaven*, &c. or giving religious respect unto her, appears from other † places where he saith, that She is our sister, because we are all the children of *Adam*.

Till this time in all Antiquity there is not to be found the least footstep of Invocating the Virgin, or any other Saint, or of giving Religious worship to them. Indeed *Gregory Nazianzen* in his * Oration upon *S. Cyprian*, tells us how † *Justina* supplicated the Virgin *Mary* for help, when she found her self assaulted by the Magical artifices of *Cyprian* and the Devil, but it's evident to any, who is conversant in the writings of the first Three Ages, that there was no such practice of Invocating Saints in the time of *Cyprian*, much less before the time of his Conversion: and therefore computing the time when *Gregory* spoke that Oration, which was after the year 370. and the time when *Cyprian* is said to have attempted the Chastity of *Justina*, which must have been before the year 247. when he was made Presbyter, it is not to be imagined, that *Gregory* spoke of *Justina's* praying to the Virgin, according to the practice of the Age wherein she and *Cyprian* lived, but according to the practice of *compellating* Saints, which now first began in his own. I call it the practice of *Compellating* Saints, because the manner of calling upon them in Rhetorical *Apostrophes*, and *wishes*, and without any circumstances of religious worship, was not as yet, strictly speaking, come up to formal, and proper Invocation, in a supplicatory way, with all the signs and solemnities of worship: and as it is usual for Painters to draw men, and women of former Ages in the garb and dresses of their own; so it is not unusual among Writers (especially for Orators) to relate things not according to the usage and practice of the times, when they were done, but according to the custome of the Age and place in which they live, as a very * Learned man hath shewed by several instances, that *Gregory*, and other Writers have done.

This alone were a sufficient Answer to that single instance out of *Gregory*, if the story of *Cyprian*, as he hath related it, were credible in the other particulars; but instead of being credible, it is highly incredible in all the other particulars of it, because there is nothing of them in the life of *S. Cyprian* written by *Pomius* his Deacon, who saith not one word of his being a Magician, or of *Justina*, or of his attempt-
ing

ing her Chastity by Magical Arts before his Conversion, nor of burning his Magical Books after it, &c. and therefore her *Invocating the Virgin Mary*, hath as much truth in it, as his falling in love with her, &c. *Gregory* took them all alike upon trust, and they are all alike to be believed.

I am come now in talking about *Gregory* to the latter end of the Fourth Century, when Superstition began to get ground, and he especially among other Fathers, gave occasion to the world of praying by way of Adoration unto Saints, by his Rhetorical, and optative Invocations of them at their solemn Commemorations: But how far that Age was in the general practice of it from this religious way of Invocating the Blessed Virgin, or other Saints, or from allowing the Invocation of her, by way of Supplication, as a part of worship and service due unto her; we may learn from St. *Epiphanius* who flourished at the same time with *Gregory*, towards the latter end of the fourth Century; when a certain Sect of women meeting together to worship the Virgin *Mary*, offered certain Cakes unto her, called *Collyridæ*, from whence they were called *Collyridians*. This good Bishop did burn with zeal against them, as it appears from his warm way of writing, in which he hath treated them as Hereticks, and Idolaters. * A late Writer acknowledges, that he treated them as Hereticks for offering Cakes unto her, and that in so doing, they gave her more honour than is allowable to a creature: Nay, if I understand his meaning right, he acknowledges, that to offer Cakes unto her, was to adore her as a goddess; and if offering Cakes unto her was so absurd as he makes it, and so enormous a crime, even a *Sacrilegious Idolatry*, as he speaks; then methinks to offer Candles, and Incense to her is so too. I should be glad to understand the difference between the two offerings, as to the charge of *Epiphanius*. But because he so pens his periods, as to make his Reader believe that that Father called them Hereticks, only upon the account of their offering unto her [as if in doing that only, they raised her above the nature of a creature] I beg the Preachers leave to cite him more at large than he hath done, and to make it appear thereby, that the holy Fathers censure will reach the honouring of her by Prayer, and external Adoration, as well as by offering unto her, and that those who only practise the former according to the direction of the *Latin Offices*, intrench upon the divine *Prerogatives*, and transgress the bounds, and limits, which the

* In a Sermon
P. 23.

¶ Heres. 69.
S. 4.

(a) Τελεμ-
νισέν.
(b) Προσκυ-
νισέν.
(c) Προσκυ-
νισέν.

(d) Νουμισέν. *Νουμισέν*, S. Aug. saith, Christ admonished her, and bid her fear her Son. Di Symb. l. 2. c. 3. Athanas. saith, he checks her, *ἐπελάττει τὴν μητέρα*, Orat. 4. advers. Atr. Chrysost. saith, he was angry at her. Irenaeus, that he repelled her unreasonable hastiness. l. 3. c. 18. and Theophyl. that he chid her not without cause. In Joh. 2. 4.

(c) Προσκυ-
νισέν.

† Προσκυ-
νισέν.

¶ Προσκυ-
νισέν.

* Προσκυ-
νισέν.

Church in his days put to the honour of the blessed Virgin. ¶ After a short account of the Original of Idolatry, which he ascribes to the Devil, and to the adulterous mind of man, which runs from the worship of the one God, as common Strumpets do from the chaste estate of Matrimony under one Husband: he saith, indeed, "The body of Mary was holy, but she was not a deity; and she was truly a Virgin, and an (a) honourable Virgin, but she was not proposed to us for (b) to be worshipped, but did (c) her self worship him that was born of her own flesh, and descended from Heaven, and the Fathers bosom. And then adds, that the Scripture did for this cause forewarn us by the mouth of our Lord, who said unto her, woman what have I to do with thee, and he called her woman lest any should (d) think too highly of her, thereby as it were prophesying of the Schisms and Heresies that would arise about her, that none by too much admiring the Holy Virgin, might fall into this folly of Heresie.

In the fifth Sect. he puts this smart question, "Which of the Prophets, saith he, permitted any man, much less a woman to be (c) worshipped? Indeed she is a chosen vessel, but nevertheless a woman, who hath not changed her nature, though she is much honoured as the bodies of Saints are, or to speak more to her praise, as Elias, who was a perpetual Virgin from the womb, and taken up into heaven, without seeing death, or as S. John, who lay in the bosom of our Lord, or as the holy Thecla. But Mary is more to be honoured than her, upon the account of the dispensation, of which she was vouchsafed worthy. But neither is Elias to be † worshipped, tho' he never died, nor John, tho' he departed in such a wonderful manner, nor is Thecla, or any other Saint worshipped. For we are not under the dominion of the old error to leave the living God, and ¶ worship his creatures, as it is written, they served and worshipped the creature, besides [or with] the Creator, and became fools. For if he will not let the Angels be * worshipped, much less will he permit the daughter of Anne to be worshipped, who was begotten, and born, as all other mortals were. In the seventh Sect. saith he, "Christ as the Contriver, "and

“and Lord of the affair formed himself of the Virgin, as of
 “the ground, but not that she should be worshipped, or that
 “he intended to make a Deity of her, or that we should bring
 “offerings to her — *he gave her not so much as power to baptize,*
 “*or to bless his Disciples, nor to rule upon the earth, but only*
 “*to be an || holy creature, and to be worthy of his kingdom.* — ¶ *Ἀγίασμα.*
 “From whence then is the Dragon come again unto us? how
 “comes it to pass that he renews his devices against us, let
 “*Mary* be || honoured, but let the Father, Son, and Holy ¶ *Ἐν τιμῇ*
 “Ghost be worshipped. Let no man worship *Mary*. This ¶ *ἵσα.*
 “Mystery is due to no man, nor woman, nor ought the Holy
 “Angels to share in this Glory — therefore tho’ *Mary* be
 “most excellent, and holy and honoured, yet she is not to be
 “worshipped: and at last concludes thus, that I may not seem
 “too tedious, let it suffice to have said, || let *Mary* be ho- ¶ *Ἡ Μαρία ἐν*
 “noured, and our Lord worshipped. ¶ *τιμῇ, ὡς καὶ ἐν*
 ¶ *προσκύσει δα.*

Ambros. l. 3. de Spir. S. c. 11. Maria erat templum Dei, non Deus templi, & ideo ille solus adorandus qui operabatur in templo. Augustinus ait, Hoc etiam ipsos optimos Angelos, & excellentissima Dei ministeria velle credamus, ut unum cum ipsis colamus Deum, cujus contemplatione beati sunt — quare honoramus eos charitate non servitute, — religet nos Religio uni omnipotenti Deo. Lib. de verâ relig. cap. 55.

I appeal to the Conscience of any *Learned Votary* of the Blessed Virgin, whether the Christians of the *Latin* Communion do not give her such Worship, as the *Greeks* express by προσκύνησις, which is the very word that *Epiphanius* uses throughout this whole discourse, when he speaks of *Worshipping* in opposition to *honouring* of the Holy Virgin: and I appeal to the Conscience of every unprejudiced Learned man, whether going in Pilgrimage to her, and praying to her in places of Divine Worship, with all the circumstances of external Adoration with bended knees and hands, and eyes lifted up to Heaven, and before her Images, solemnly consecrated to her, deserve not the name of Worship, as it is signified by προσκύνησις? Nay, let them tell me if praying unto her in a posture of worship for Temporal, or Spiritual blessings, which none but God can give, and carrying her image about in Solemn Procession, while they chant forth Hymns unto her, do not answer the full import of that word? and whether the holy Father in all probability would not have made the same distinction betwixt *honouring* and *worshipping* the Blessed Virgin against these practices, that he did against the *Collyridians*? Our Saviour thought the very falling down

before the Devil without Temple, Priest, Altar or Offering, would have been a worshipping of him, in his esteem the bare external act of Adoration was both *προσκύνησις*, and *Latría*: for when the Devil said unto him, *all these things I will give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me*; He answered him, *Get thee gon Satan, for it is written, thou shalt * worship the Lord thy God, and him only thou shalt † serve.*

Wherefore this full and ample testimony of S. Epiphanius is an evident proof, that as yet the honour of the B. Virgin was, at least generally speaking, confined within just bounds, and limits, and that the Church hitherto did not allow the Worship and Service of Prayer, and Invocation to be given unto her. As yet she had not commenced Queen of Heaven, nor Mediatrix between Man and God, nor received any Prayers or Addresses as a Service due unto her; nor sat in the Temple of God, tho'

shortly after men began to think too highly of her, * and to magnifie her holiness so much as to doubt whether she ever sinned? While men were thus disposed by Superstition to exalt her

above the rank, and condition of an humane creature, it happened that Nestorius Patriarch of Constantinople, taught the world, that it was not lawful to call her the * mother of God.

This alarm'd the Christian world, and made good men afraid, that Nestorius under this pretence was setting up for another Arius, or Sabellius to undermine the Deity of Christ. Upon this a General Council was called at Ephesus in the year 431. in which Nestorius was deposed, and his opinion condemned as Heretical, and then in opposition to him, and his followers, men, as it is natural for them to do, began to run into the other extrem, and let their inventions, and fancies take an unlimited scope in magnifying the Blessed Virgin. Then they began to call her Lady, to talk of her immaculate Conception, and afterwards, to assert it, which seems contrary to the testimony, and opinion of Epiphanius, * who saith, she was begotten, as all other men were, of the Seed of man, and the womb of a Woman. Then they came to assert that she did not bring forth our Lord † after the common custom of women,

* ἡ μὲν ἐκ θεοῦ
γεννημένην
πατρὶς ἡ
ἀνθρώπων φύ-
σις, &c. Hæccl.
69. 5. S.

† Παρθένῳ

ἢ ὡς ἂν ὑπάρχει μὲν ἡ φύσις καθ' ἑαυτήν, τὴν πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἔχουσαν ἰδίαν φύσιν, ἀπομοιρα ἢ ὡς ἐκείνην τὰ μετὰ τὸ γέννημα. In Orat. de Laud. B. V. Maria, Epiphanius infulse ascripta. Sic Bernardus in deprec. ad B. Mariam fecit ut deum & hominem clausa conciperes, clausa pareres. Hence they apply unto her what is written in Cant. 4. 12. A Garden inclosed is my Sister, my Spouse, a Spring shut up, a Fountain sealed.

contrary

contrary to the testimony of || *Tertullian*, and the Holy Scripture, which saith, that when the days of her purification were accomplished, they brought Jesus to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, as it is written in the Law of the Lord, every male that openeth the womb, shall be holy to the Lord. Then also they began to tell Superstitious stories of her appearing, and of her || Statues turning away in indignation from some that prayed unto her, and to assert without any ground in Scripture, or pure Antiquity, that she had vowed her Virginity to God, before the Angel *Gabriel* came unto her, and then came in the story of her *Assumption* (which seems to me to have been the last improvement of her immaculate Conception, and innocence) contrary to the testimony of *Epiphanius*, who in *Hæresy* 68. observes several times, that the Scriptures were silent, and said nothing of her death, and that he could not tell whether she was dead, and buried, or no, or were yet alive, and remained immortal, according to what is written, *Rev.* 12. 14. or whether she died a Martyr, because *Simeon* told her, a Sword should pierce thro' her Soul. He could not determine what was become of her, which manifestly proves, that her Assumption was not then the Tradition of the Church. To be short, then they began to make such extravagant Orations, and Sermons in her praise, as that is, which is foolishly ascribed to *S. Epiphanius de laudibus B. Mariae* Vol. 2. p. 291. and that, which falsely bears the name of || *S. Athanasius* under the title of a Sermon, upon the Annunciation of the most Holy Virgin the mother of God. There the Author of it saith, that as the Son of the Virgin is King and Lord, so she by him is Queen and Lady; and that she stands at his right hand in a Vesture of Gold, in a Golden Vesture of incorruption and immortality, and then he invokes her in this religious manner, O daughter of *Abraham*, and *David*, incline thine ears unto our Prayers, and forget not thy people, nor us who are of thy Father's house, &c.

Thus by degrees, from over-admiring, men came to worshipping the Blessed Virgin, and the bounds being once broken down, which the Scripture sets to the Praise, and Honour of Creatures, Superstition never stopt, till the Church came to have a Queen, as well as a King of Heaven, a mother, as well as a Father of mercy, and a *Mediatrice*, as well as a Mediator betwixt sinful men, and God.

The Devotions, and Assertions, which I have cited out of the

¶ Advertisement to the Exposition, &c. p. 12.

¶ *Per Virginem Matrem concedat nobis Dominus salutem. & pacem. Officium B. M. in Sabb.*

¶ Doth any man pray unto God through the merits, or intercession of any of his Brethren upon Earth?

the Offices of the *Latin Church*, and her Ancient and Modern approved Writers are a sufficient proof of this Charge; and I was the more willing to set them before you, because some late Authors have done all they can to palliate, and disguise the *Latin worship*, and turn the best side of it outwards; though, God knows, it hath a very strange appearance, as it is *misrepresented* in the best dress, that Art and Wit can put upon it. They tell us they pray to the Saints, and by consequence to the *Virgin*, * as we pray to our Brethren, who are upon Earth to pray with us, and for us in the name of *Jesus Christ*; but do we pray to our absent Brethren? does any man in *England* pray to his Friend in the *Indies* to pray with him, and for him to God in the name of Christ? doth he desire to be heard by his absent Brothers merits? doth he consecrate Temples and Altars conjunctly to his, and God's honour? doth he put his name with God's in the same Prayers, and Litanies? Or doth he consecrate Images to him, and place them in Temples, or over Altars, and then pray to him before any of those Images in the most humble posture of external adoration? or say, and sing more Prayers, and Hymns to him, than to Christ himself? Or when men pray to any of their Brethren upon Earth, that are present with them, do they, properly speaking, offer up Prayers unto them, as a Spiritual Service, with hands and eyes lifted up to Heaven? or do they give them such Titles, as the *Latine Offices* give the Virgin, or tell them of their Merits, || or pray unto God in any of their names, and together with their Prayers offer up Praises, and Thanksgivings to them? I desire the late Apologists to Answer these Questions, and then to tell me, whether indeed they only pray to her to pray for them to our common Master in the name of our common Mediator, or whether they do no more, than desire her Intercession to God, with the same mind that we desire one anothers Prayers? If this be really so, how dare they, as I have shewn, pray unto her to bless them, and to bestow Temporal, and Spiritual blessings upon them, and to present their Prayers to God; which the Scripture tells us is the proper office of Christ? How dare they pray unto God conjunctly through her and Christ's merits, and joyn his passion, and her merits in the Absolution of Penitents? How dare they call her the only hope of Sinners, || and pray unto God through her

her merits, and intercession, where they do not mention the merits, and intercession of Christ? Nay, how dare they give praise to her and the Holy Trinity in the same Collect, or pray formally, and absolutely unto her alone, as unto a Deity, and offer Candles, and Incense, and solemn Praises, and Thanksgivings unto her, which they desire her to receive how mean so ever they be, and unequal to her merits? || But || Exposition, Sect. 4.
 we are told, we ought to understand, that *in what terms so ever those prayers are couched, it is the intension of the Church, and of her faithful to reduce them always to this form of PRAY FOR U S.* But can the intension of the Church, and of her faithful, alter the nature of things; or is this declaration of their intension to be admitted against the plain Literal, and Grammatical sence of those prayers, wherein they pray to her against their own rule, *to give them good things, and to deliver them from evil, and not to despise their prayer, but to admit them within the Sanctuary of her Audience,* which certainly is equivalent to the form of *hear our prayer,* which they acknowledge to be the proper manner of speaking to God.

Would it not have been more for the honour of that Church, which styles her self *Catholick*, and *Apostolick*, and a far more Authentick, and Satisfactory Declaration of her intension, to have reformed, or laid aside such prayers in a general Council, and to have condemned all the other Prayers and Offices in their allowed, approved, and celebrated Writers, who have taught the people to give the Virgin Divine Titles, and pray unto her in the same stile, that *Jews*, and *Christians* pray unto God. How can we trust our Souls, or the Souls of our Children in such a Church, whose Churchmen are fain to make such an Exposition of her Liturgical Devotions, as is not without violence reconcileable to the Letter of them, and which still lets so many Books, and Offices be recommended to her people, that are absolutely contradictory to this late Exposition, which for many good reasons, elsewhere given, we cannot admit for a fixt and Authentick Exposition of the *Latin Church*.

Wherefore my Brethren of this truly Catholick, and Apostolick Church of *England*, let us take care to keep within the bounds and limits, which our pure and holy Mother, after the example of the Primitive Church, hath set to the praise, and honour of the blessed Virgin. Let us chearfully,
 and

[6. Serm. p. 5.]

and respectfully give her the honourable Titles of Holy, and Blessed, and perpetual Virgin; and call her without scruple the Holy, and Blessed Mother of God: Nay, let us for peace sake go as far as we can with our fellow-Christians of the *Latin Communion*, so we go with caution, and circumspection in honouring of this Glorious Saint. Let us acknowledge with them, that she is to be honoured above all Saints; but let us not honour her with Religious honour, nor pray unto her either as a Donor, or as an Intercessor in the presence of God. Let us acknowledge with them her perpetual Virginity, according to ancient Tradition; and if it will gain, or oblige any of them, let us not oppose them in the opinion they have, that she promised, and vowed her Virginity to God; for it is an innocent Opinion, though it is precarious, and hath no ground in Scripture, or Primitive Antiquity. In a word, let us admire her singular Purity and Holiness, though we cannot admit her || Innocence. Let us give her all the honour that is due to so great a Saint; but not one jot more than is allowed to a Creature; and if by doing so much, and no more, you offend on the left hand, and on the right, the offence will be taken, and not given; but if by refusing to do so much you offend, the offence will be given, to both Churches, and that will be a great offence. To conclude, let us always mention her with respect; let her Name still perfume the Air like precious Ointment; let us celebrate her great Virtues; let us keep her Festivals, as it becomes true Sons of the Primitive Church of *England*; let us imitate her blessed Example, and thank God for the benefit of it; let us endeavour, as she did, to hear the Word of God, and keep it, and to do the will of our Heavenly Father, and then we shall all become [*Κατασκευασμένοι*] high favourites of Heaven, even the Mother, and Sister, and Brethren of Christ; To whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be ascribed by the universal Church, all Worship, Adoration, Majesty, and Dominion both now, and evermore. AMEN.

F I N I S.